

STORE'S
EMPTY.

YEP.

SO, UH...
MAGIC, UH...

HMM.
WHERE TO
START...

WELL, YOU CAME
HERE TO ASK ME
QUESTIONS, SO...

ASK
AWAY!

OHH, SURE, UH...

DID... YOU NOTICE
YOUR MARK BEFORE OR
AFTER YOU KNEW YOU
COULD DO... WHATEVER
IT WAS YOU DID TO
KICK LIKE THAT?

MY
MARK?

YEAH, WITH ME, I STARTED
SEEING PEOPLE'S AURAS WAY
BEFORE I REALIZED THERE WAS
A MARK ON MY BACK. WAS IT
THAT WAY WITH YOU?

OF COURSE.
HE JUST
ASSUMES...

I DON'T
HAVE A
MARK.

WAIT, YOU... YOU
STILL DON'T KNOW
YOU HAVE ONE?!

I... I DON'T SEE A MARK.

REALLY? YOU SOUNDED SO SURE I STARTED TO THINK THERE MUST BE ONE.

I... I WAS SURE! I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY, UH...

CAN THEY BE ELSEWHERE?

NOT THAT I'M VOLUNTEERING TO LOOK! I JUST...

I-I WAS PROBABLY JUST WRONG! I THOUGHT I COULD SPECIFICALLY TELL WHEN PEOPLE HAVE MARKS.

I'LL... LOOK MYSELF OVER LATER, BUT I THINK IT'S JUST ANOTHER TYPE OF MAGIC.

I SHOULD... PROBABLY PUT MY SHIRT ON...

YOU ARE WISE TO BE SUSPICIOUS, DEAR CHILD, BUT SO FAR AS YOUR MARK IS CONCERNED...

IT'S NOT HIS FAULT HE THINKS YOU HAVE ONE.

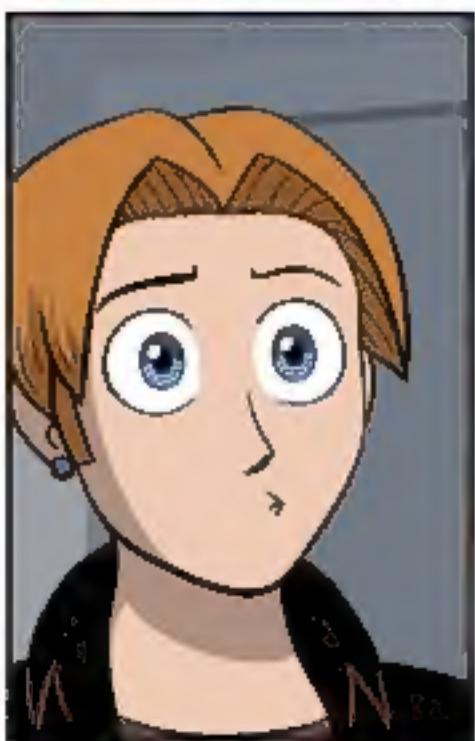
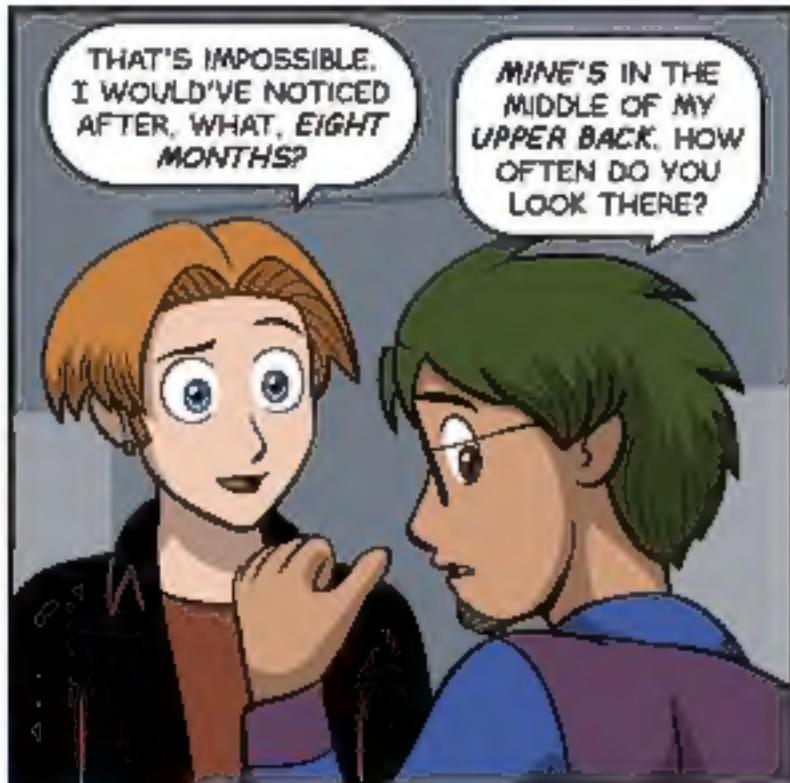
HE HAS NOT YET LEARNED TO TELL THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ONE WHO HAS A MARK, AND ONE WHO MERELY HAD ONE PRIOR TO MY WAKING THEM...

UH, NO. SEE,
PEOPLE CAN HAVE
MAGIC WITHOUT
MARKS, AND...

I KNOW THEY CAN. I
KNOW BECAUSE I CAN
SPECIFICALLY TELL
WHEN PEOPLE HAVE
MAGIC MARKS, AND
YOU HAVE ONE.

THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE.
I WOULD'VE NOTICED
AFTER, WHAT, EIGHT
MONTHS?

MINE'S IN THE
MIDDLE OF MY
UPPER BACK. HOW
OFTEN DO YOU
LOOK THERE?



SO... WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT MAGIC MARKS?

EVEN LESS THAN I THOUGHT. APPARENTLY, I KNOW THAT THERE ARE A BUNCH OF PEOPLE WHO SEEM TO HAVE THEM, AND PEOPLE WITH THEM HAVE MAGIC POWERS.

BUT YOU KNOW MORE THAN THAT? YOU KNOW WHERE THEY COME FROM? WHY WE WERE CHOSEN FOR THEM?

ACTUALLY... I DON'T THINK I DO KNOW MUCH MORE THAN YOU ABOUT THEM.

REALLY? BUT...

I KNOW THEY GIVE YOU ACCESS TO A SINGLE SPELL SOMETHING THAT IS SOMEHOW A REFLECTION OF WHO YOU ARE. I KNOW THAT THEY CAN BE GIVEN TO PEOPLE BY BEINGS WITH IMMENSE MAGICAL POWER, BUT I DON'T--

A BEING OF IMMENSE MAGICAL POWER? LIKE WHAT? A GENIE? AN ANGEL? *(GASP)* ARE THE Q FROM STAR TREK REAL?

THEY'RE IMMORTALS.

IMMORTALS? WHOA... AND WHAT ARE THEY CALLED?

IMMORTALS.

AS FAR AS I KNOW,

...THEY'RE LITERALLY JUST CALLED "IMMORTALS"?

THAT'S... TERRIBLE.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT EXACTLY THEY ARE OR HOW THEY WORK, BUT ONE OR MORE IMMORTALS COULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR GIVING PEOPLE MARKS.

OR MAYBE IT'S SOMETHING ELSE. I REALLY DON'T KNOW.

SO YOU DON'T KNOW WHY WE WERE GIVEN THEM, THEN.

IT COULD BE AS SIMPLE AS A BORED IMMORTAL.

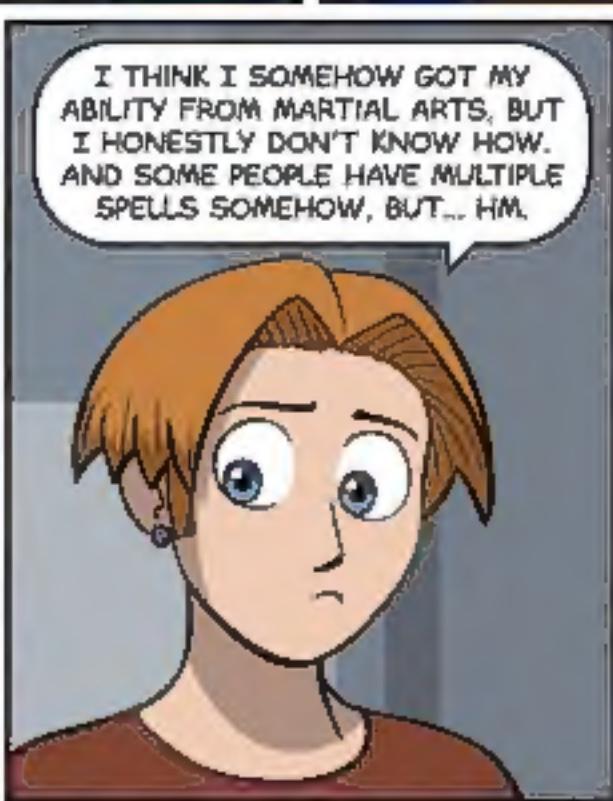


BOREDOM IS BUT ONE OF THE MANY REASONS I'M UPSETTING THE BALANCE BETWEEN THE LAYERS OF REALITY WITHIN THIS UNIVERSE.

I THINK I SOMEHOW GOT MY ABILITY FROM MARTIAL ARTS, BUT I HONESTLY DON'T KNOW HOW. AND SOME PEOPLE HAVE MULTIPLE SPELLS SOMEHOW, BUT... HM.

HEH. YOU KNOW MORE THAN I DO, BUT IT SOUNDS LIKE THERE'S A LOT YOU'RE WONDERING ABOUT, TOO.

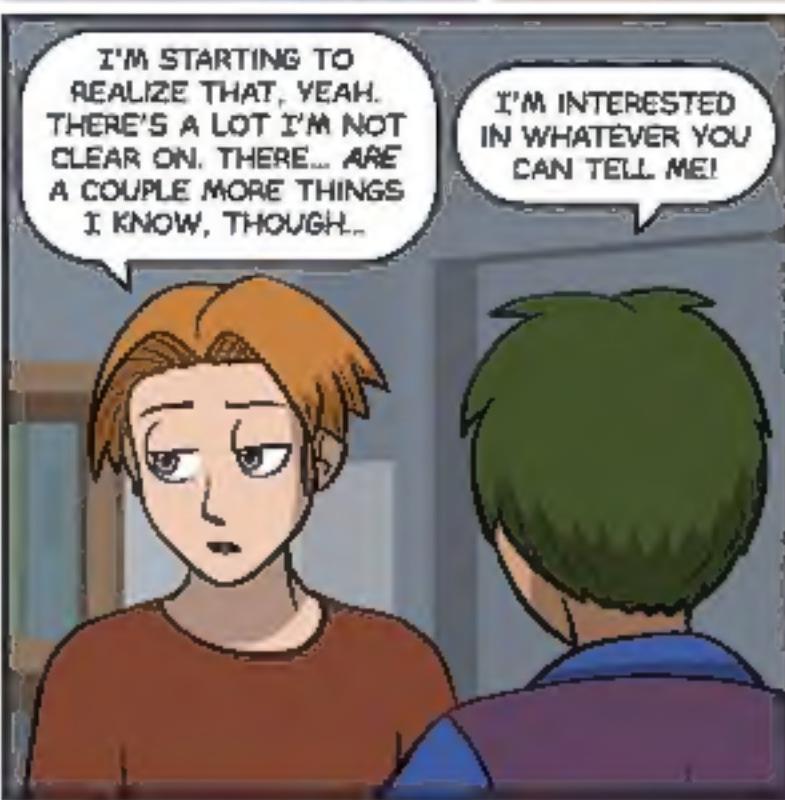
NONETHLESS, VERY ASTUTE.



I'M STARTING TO REALIZE THAT, YEAH. THERE'S A LOT I'M NOT CLEAR ON. THERE... ARE A COUPLE MORE THINGS I KNOW, THOUGH...

I'M INTERESTED IN WHATEVER YOU CAN TELL ME!

I KNOW YOU'VE MET AT LEAST TWO OTHER PEOPLE WITH CONFIRMED MAGIC MARKS, AND YOU'VE MET AT LEAST ONE MAGIC USER BEFORE TONIGHT WHO DID NOT HAVE A MARK.



THIS IS ALL
GOING TO BE A MESS
TO EXPLAIN TO
EDWARD, ISN'T IT?

I DON'T THINK WE
SHOULD TELL MY DAD
ANYTHING.

WE
SHOULDN'T?

DON'T WE KINDA
SORTA TELL HIM
EVERYTHING WHEN
IT COMES TO STUFF
LIKE THIS?



DEALING WITH THIS STUFF
ISN'T HIS JOB ANYMORE. THE
PEOPLE WHO DO DEAL WITH IT
ALREADY KNOW ABOUT HOW
DEX GOT MARKED.

THEY PROBABLY
KNOW MORE ABOUT
WHAT'S GOING ON
THAN WE DO.

MAYBE, BUT WHAT
ABOUT MY DREAMS? AND YOUR... YOU KNOW.

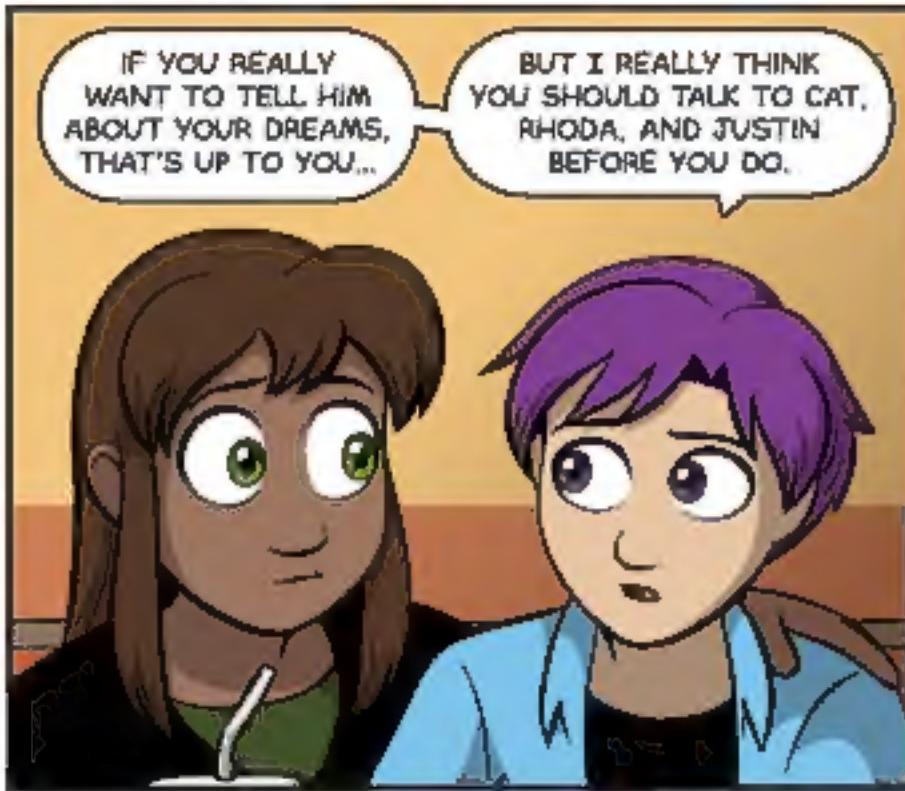


IF YOU REALLY
WANT TO TELL HIM
ABOUT YOUR DREAMS,
THAT'S UP TO YOU...

BUT I REALLY THINK
YOU SHOULD TALK TO CAT,
RHODA, AND JUSTIN
BEFORE YOU DO.

AS FOR ME,
WELL... PLEASE
DON'T SAY
ANYTHING.

I... DON'T
WANT HIM TO
KNOW ABOUT
MY MARK.



WHY WOULDN'T
YOU WANT YOUR DAD
TO KNOW ABOUT
YOUR MARK?

QUITE DISTURBING.
SEEING ONE'S SON
LIKE THAT.

HRMPH.

:SIGH:

I WORRY ABOUT
YOU, TEDD. ALL THIS TIME
TRANSFORMED AS A GIRL... IT
CAN'T BE GOOD FOR YOU.

I JUST
DON'T.

I DON'T KNOW IF THEY'D WANT ME TELLING YOU WHO THEY ARE, AND YOU PROBABLY DON'T KNOW THEM ANYWAY, BUT YEAH, I KNOW A COUPLE PEOPLE WITH "CONFIRMED" MAGIC MARKS.

I PROBABLY WOULDN'T KNOW THEM, YEAH. I'M BETTING WE DON'T EVEN GO TO THE SAME SCHOOL.

SCHOOL? AS IN HIGH SCHOOL?



UH, YEAH,
MOPERVILLE
SOUTH.

YOU'RE STILL IN
HIGH SCHOOL? WITH
THOSE ABS?

A SENIOR IN
HIGH SCHOOL.
EIGHTEEN.

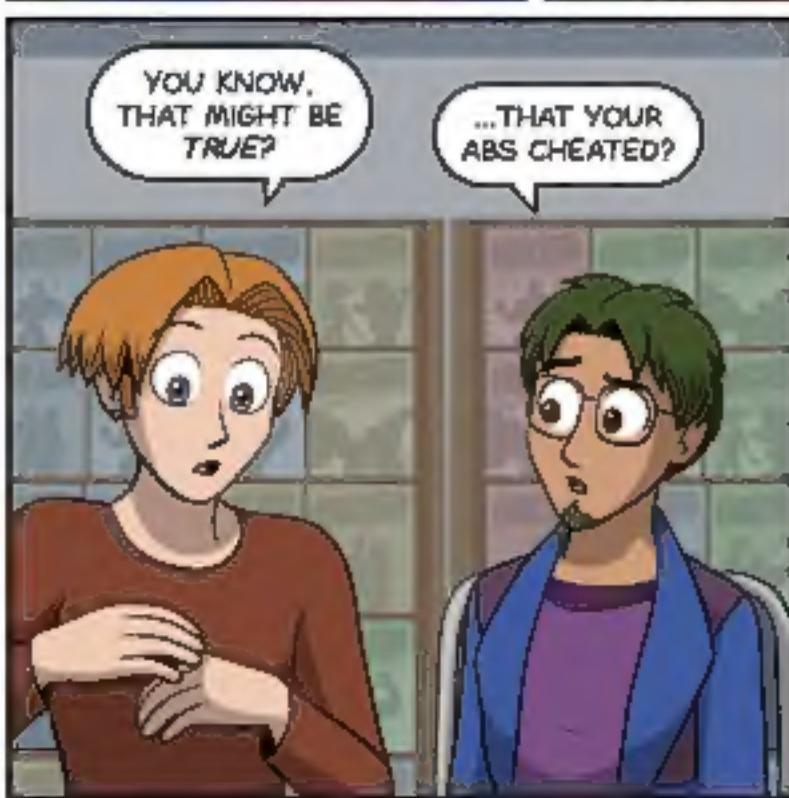
OH, GOOD. I MEAN,
UH, I'M NINETEEN.
FRESHMAN AT THE
COMMUNITY COLLEGE.



N-NOT THAT OUR RELATIVE
AGES MATTER! THAT'S NOT
IMPORTANT FOR... ANYTHING...

ACTUALLY, IT DOES
MATTER, BECAUSE I WAS
SORTA THINKING ABOUT
ASKING YOU OUT.





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Next story comic Monday

Next story comic Thursday, then Monday. Then cake (Maybe not cake).



HOW DID THINGS GO WITH LUKE?

DID YOU FIND OUT IF HE'S UP TO ANYTHING?

WAS THERE ROMANCE?

IT'S A LEGITIMATE QUESTION.

ESPECIALLY IF HE'S EVIL.

I MEAN, THINK ABOUT IT. EVIL ROMANCE THAT'S IMPORTANT.

IT WENT PRETTY WELL, BUT TRYING TO EXPLAIN STUFF ABOUT MAGIC MARKS MADE ME REALIZE JUST HOW CLUELESS I ACTUALLY AM. I DON'T THINK I TOLD HIM MUCH OF ANYTHING HE DIDN'T ALREADY KNOW.

TO BE FAIR, THERE ISN'T THAT MUCH TO KNOW ABOUT MARKS.

ARE YOU KIDDING? THERE'S TONS OF STUFF TO KNOW!

THEY'RE MOST COMMONLY GIVEN BY IMMORTALS. THE ACTUAL SHAPE OF THE MARKS DOESN'T MATTER, BUT THE SURFACE AREA DOES. THE SPELLS ARE BASED ON AN INDIVIDUAL'S INNATE AFFINITY FOR A TYPE OF SPELL, A REFLECTION OF THEIR PERSONALITY, SOMETHING THEY'RE YEARNING FOR, OR A COMBINATION OF THE THREE. PEOPLE NEED TO HAVE ENOUGH POWER TO BE GIVEN A MARK IF THEY DON'T HAVE AN INNATE AFFINITY OR YEARNING FOR SOMETHING. AND...

HUH. THAT ACTUALLY RAISES EVEN FURTHER QUESTIONS ABOUT HOW I WAS ABLE TO GET A MARK.

YOU HAVE A MARK?!

OH UH. I GUESS I NEVER GOT AROUND TO MENTIONING THAT SORRY TEDD HAS A MAGIC MARK UNDER THE HAIR ON HIS HEAD.

SOMEHOW

YOU DO FEEL MORE LIKE A GIRL SOMETIMES MAYBE YOU HAVE AN AFFINITY FOR GENDER MAGIC?

M. MAYBE BUT "AFFINITY" IS LESS A REFLECTION OF SOMEONE'S PERSONALITY AND MORE LIKE SOMETHING GENETIC SUSAN'S AFFINITY FOR MAGIC WEAPONS WAS JUST SOMETHING SHE WAS BORN WITH.

MAYBE YOU YEARNED FOR YOUR OWN GIRLY TRANSFORMATION SPELL?

I PROBABLY WOULD HAVE BEEN... IF NOT FOR HAVING THREE OTHER WAYS TO DO IT

SO... DOES THAT MEAN YOU HAVE A LOT OF MAGIC POWER?

IN THEORY MAYBE? BUT I'M THINKING IT'S MORE LIKELY WE JUST DON'T KNOW AS MUCH ABOUT THE CRITERIA AS WE THOUGHT WE DID

UH. SPEAKING OF NOT KNOWING AS MUCH..

RIGHT WE DON'T KNOW WHEN TEDD GOT MARKED. BUT IT WAS PROBABLY VERY RECENTLY BECAUSE HE ACCIDENTALLY TURNED HIMSELF INTO A GIRL FOR A WHILE WHICH UNDID HIS HAIR COLOR ENCHANTMENT

HAIR COLOR--GAH!

IT'S NOT A
BIG DEAL THAT YOU MISSED
IT JUSTIN. IT'S JUST--

CHANGE BLINDNESS,
I KNOW, BUT... I SERIOUSLY
MISSED SOMETHING THAT
OBVIOUS?!

YOU ALSO
MISSED THAT I
WAS A GIRL



WELL, YEAH, BUT
I'M ALWAYS SECOND
GUESSING WHAT
SEX YOU ARE.

WAIT ARE
YOU STILL
A GIRL?

SIGH

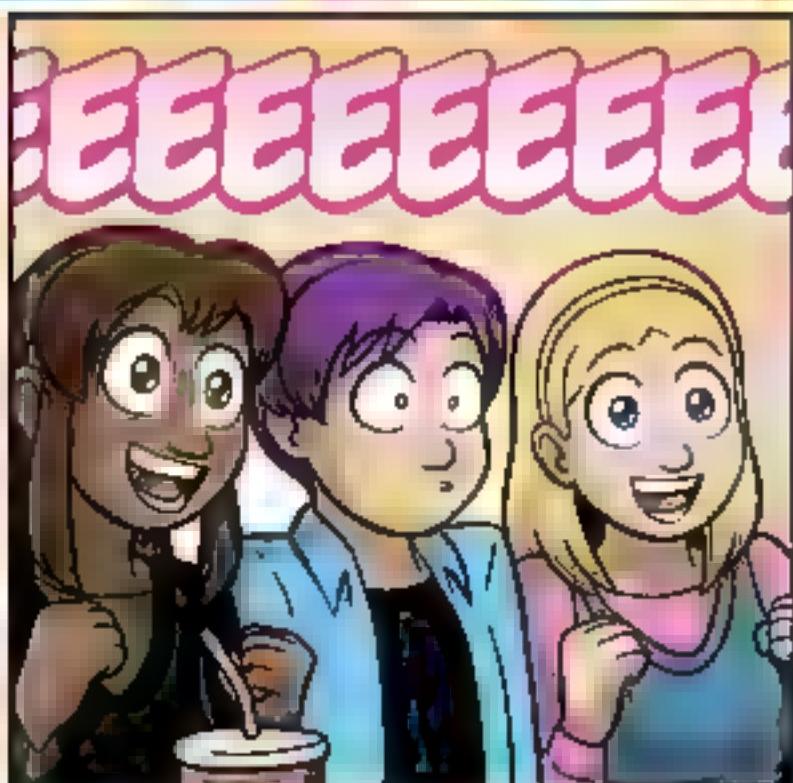
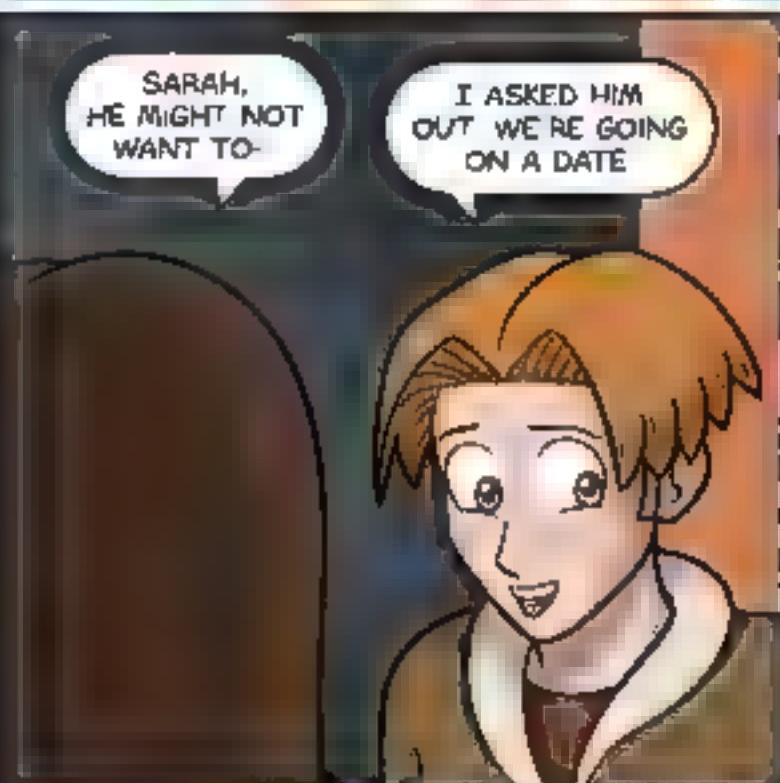
ROMANCE! YES?
NO? PENDING. ?

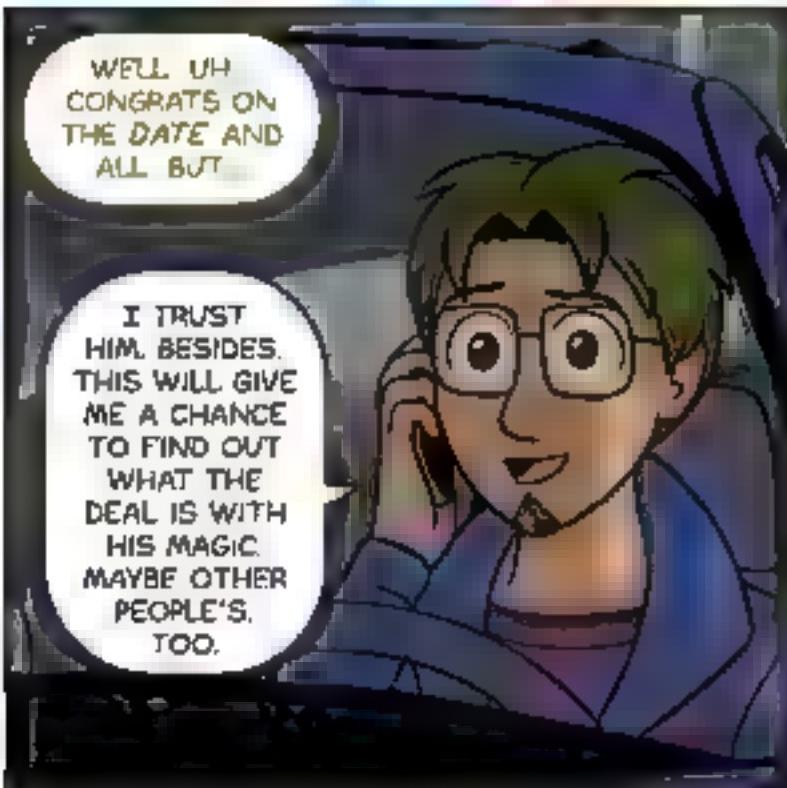
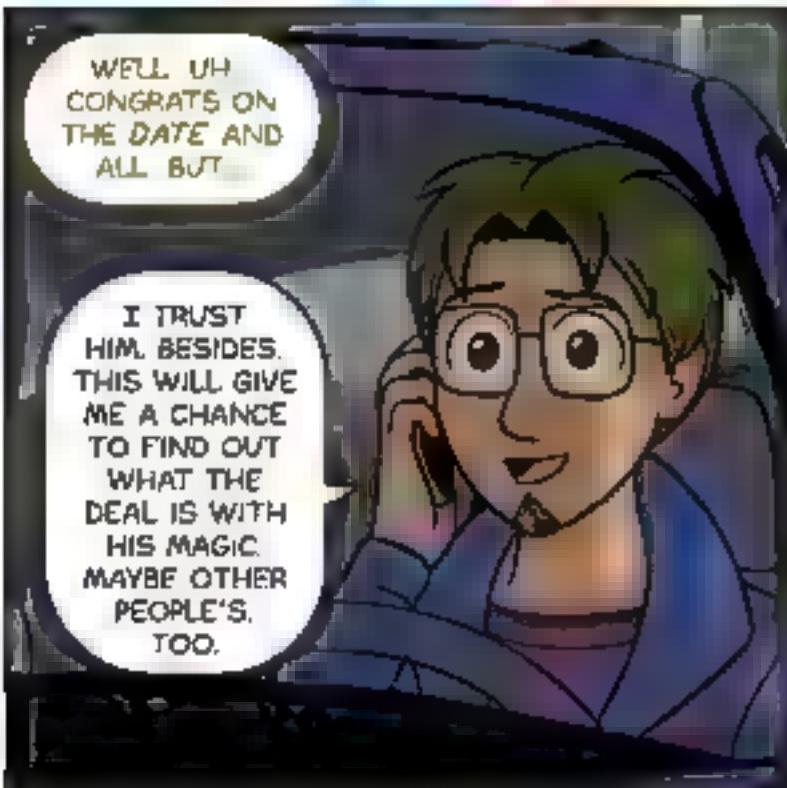
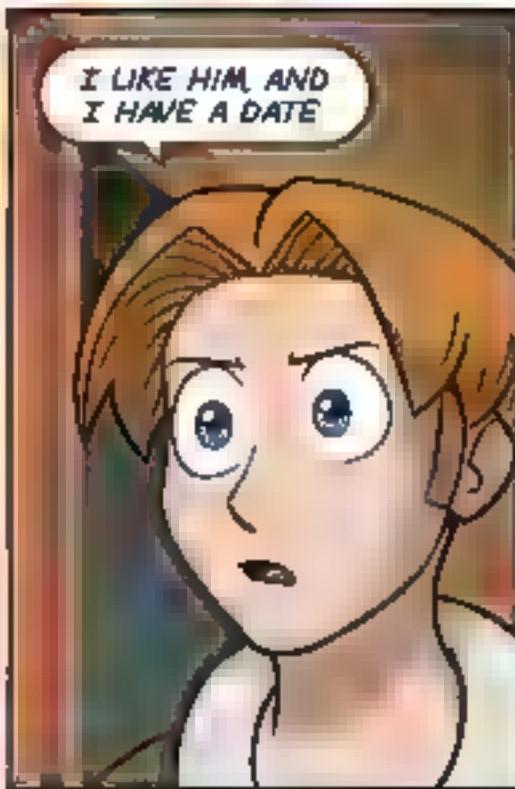
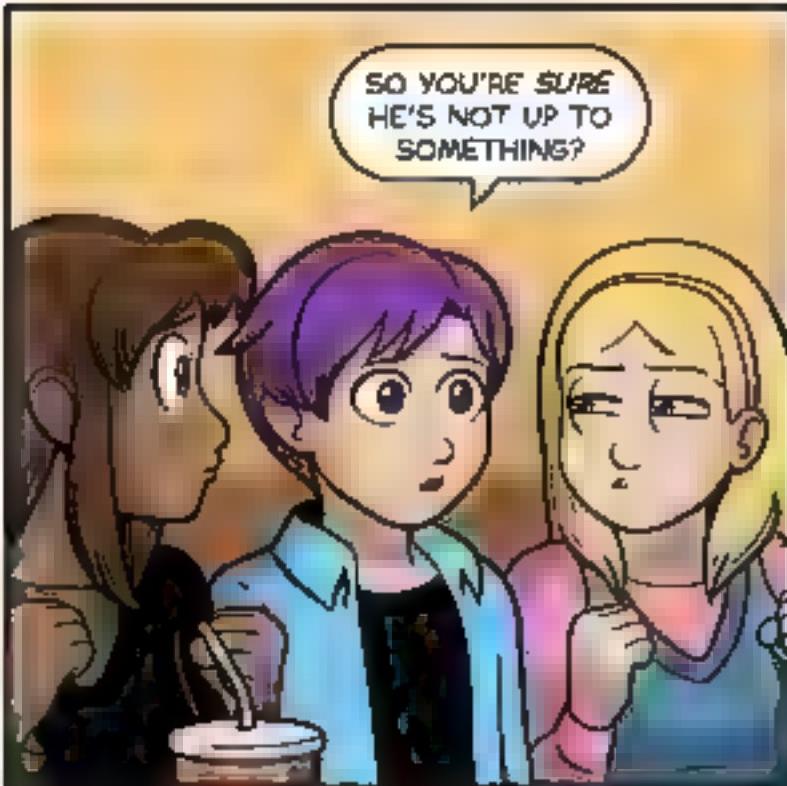


SARAH,
HE MIGHT NOT
WANT TO-

I ASKED HIM
OUT WE'RE GOING
ON A DATE

EEEEE





YOU'RE SURE YOU
DON'T HAVE A MARK
ON YOUR BACK?

YEAH I'VE JU
LOOKED THERE
RECENTLY

HUH. I
GUESS THOSE
DREAMS WERE
JUST DREAMS
AFTER ALL

THAT WOULD BE THE
MOST LOGICAL EXPLANATION.
JUSTIN'S FIRE AURA DEALIE IS
PROBABLY JUST A RESULT OF
HIS MARTIAL ARTS TRAINING.

OH MY GOD YOU'RE
PROBABLY RIGHT, BUT I THINK
YOUR SUBCONSCIOUS ACTUALLY
WAS TRYING TO TELL YOU
SOMETHING ABOUT RHODA.

WHY DO YOU
SAY THAT?

BECAUSE WE STILL
DON'T KNOW HOW
THAT BOAR GOT BIG.

OHHH

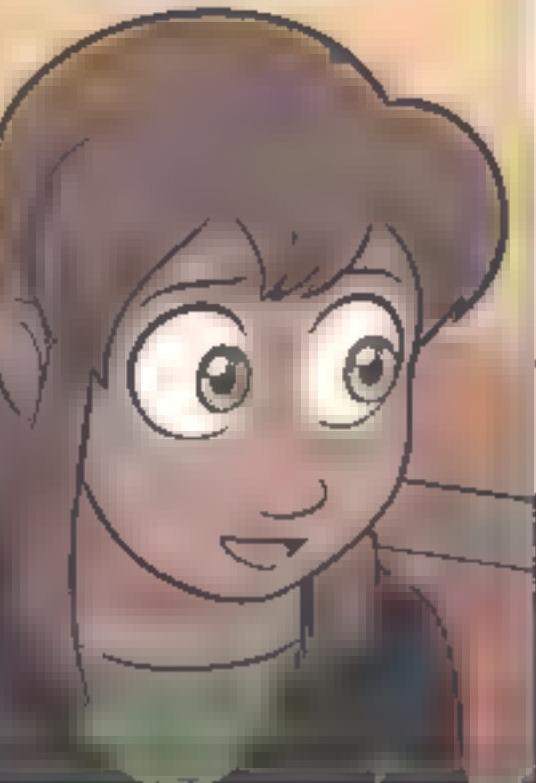
NEW SPELLS ARE OFTEN
USED BY ACCIDENT... AND
SHE WAS ALONE HOLY
CRAP IT ADDS UP.

ARE YOU SURE
YOU DON'T HAVE
A MAGIC MARK?

I'LL DOUBLE
CHECK LATER.

HER SUBCONSCIOUS TRYING TO TELL HER SOMETHING?

HER SUB-
CONSCIOUS
ISN'T THAT
CLEVER.



THE SQUIRREL LACKS THAT SORT OF INSIGHT AND YET SHE KNOWS ABOUT SEVERAL MARKS SHE SHOULD KNOW NOTHING ABOUT?

A THIRD PARTY IS TELLING HER THINGS IN HER DREAMS.



SOMEONE I KNOW NOTHING ABOUT!
DELIGHTFUL!

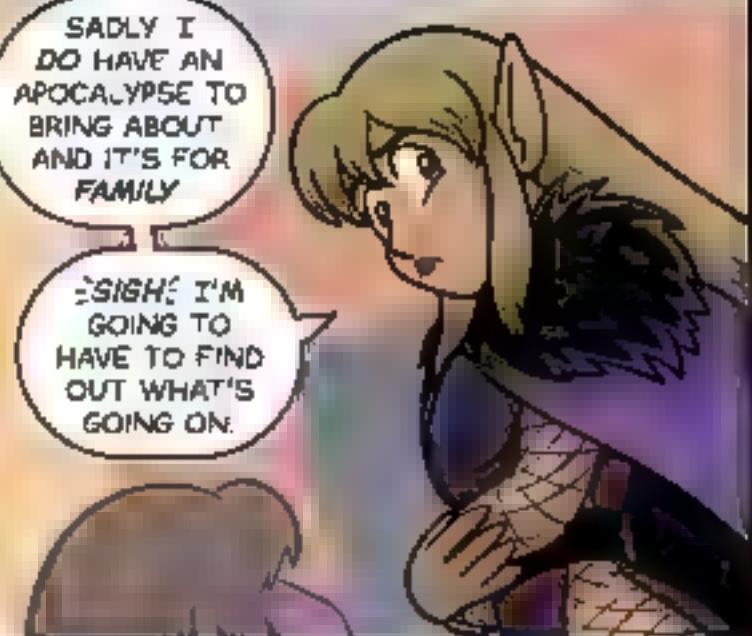


SADLY I DO HAVE AN APOCALYPSE TO BRING ABOUT AND IT'S FOR FAMILY

:SIGH: I'M GOING TO HAVE TO FIND OUT WHAT'S GOING ON.

OH WELL THIS CAN STILL BE FUN.

IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE I'VE "ADVISED" PEOPLE THROUGH THEIR DREAMS.



MMPH. GETTING UP
BEFORE NOON ON A
SATURDAY SATURDAY
IS FOR SLEEPING.

ON THE SIXTH
DAY SARAH
RESTED AND ON
THE SEVENTH SHE
DID HOMEWORK

FINE SHOWER.
HELLO-GENE
BLEH

CHECK FOR
MAGIC MARK
IN VAIN LIKE I
DO EVERY
DAY

NO
MAGIC MARK
BECAUSE I'M
NOT



Squirrel Prophet - The end

Next Story Comic - March 2nd

EGS:NP, Sketchbooks, and Commentaries in the meantime.

See commentary below for more details about this Break / Not Break.



SO YEAH, UNLESS YOU'RE GOING SOMEWHERE WITH A DRESS CODE WEAR WHATEVER. HECK, WEAR SWEAT PANTS. IF HE DOESN'T ACCEPT YOU IN SWEAT PANTS, HE'S GARBAGE

I'M NOT WEARING SWEAT PANTS, AND WE'RE GOING TO THE MALL

THE MALL

YEAH

YOU'RE GOING ON A SATURDAY MALL DATE

JH. YEAH

WHY WHY
WOULD YOU
DO THIS.

WELL...

I'M OKAY WITH WHAT EVER FOR DINNER.

OH, AH... I DON'T REALLY KNOW A LOT OF PLACES. I'M NOT SURE WHAT I'D PICK.

ANYTHING'S FINE
WITH ME, REALLY WHAT-
EVER YOU FEEL LIKE

I'M NOT SURE
WHAT TO PICK
EITHER.

MALL FOOD COURT?

SOUNDS GOOD!

OH GOD, YOU'RE
GOING TO BE ONE OF
THOSE COUPLES

I TOLD YOU'RE DORKS

WHAT?

THE MALL ISN'T JUST A GOOD CHOICE FOR FOOD. THERE'S ALSO STUFF TO TALK ABOUT EVERYWHERE. AND WE'RE TRYING TO GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER.

FAIR POINT
JUST STAY AWAY FROM THE BOOK STORE

WHY WOULD I NEED TO STAY AWAY FROM THE BOOK STORE BOOKS ARE GREAT THEY'RE FULL OF PAPER AND HAVE WORDS IN THEM.

OKAY YES I'M
I'LL AVOID THE
BOOK STORE

MEAN- WHILE!

YOUR DATE
IS AT THE
MALL?

YEP

NICE

YEP AND I'LL BE WEARING
THIS RANDOM BLACK SHIRT

GOOD
CHOICE

SO AH, I
DON'T SUPPOSE
YOU HAVE ANY
ADVICE?

WHAT,
LIKE, DATE
ADVICE?

WHAT AM I SONNA
TELL YOU THAT YOU DON'T
ALREADY KNOW?

I DON'T KNOW. YOU'VE BEEN DATING
NANASE FOR A WHILE, THOUGH. AND
YOU HAVE MEMORIES FROM ANOTHER
UNIVERSE AND STUFF

HMM... OKAY, HERE'S SOMETHING.
ESTABLISH WHO'S TAKING THE
LEAD BEFORE TRYING TO CATCH A
BAD GUY YOU DON'T WANT TO BE
TRIPPING ALL OVER EACH OTHER.

UH.
WHAT?

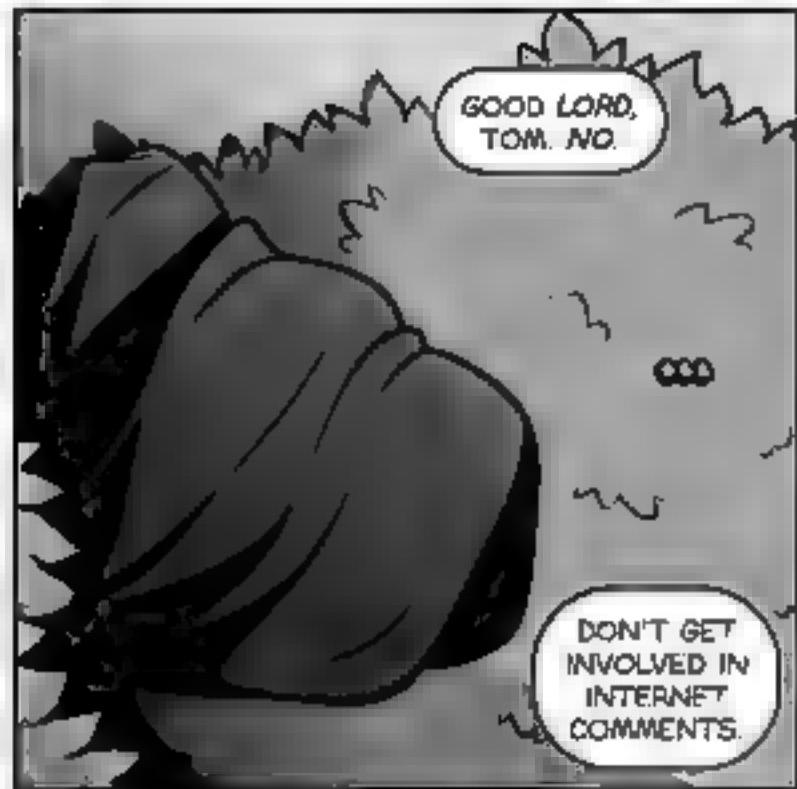
ALSO, DON'T POUT
AND MAKE PUPPY DOG
FACES IN THE HOPE OF
PITY-SEDUCING HER IF
SHE TURNS OUT TO BE
ASEXUAL. THAT'S NOT
COOL, BRO

I'LL
KEEP THAT
IN MIND?

AND IF SHE CHANGES
HER HAIR STYLE FOR
THE LOVE OF GOD,
SAY IT LOOKS GREAT

I DON'T THINK I
NEED TO WORRY
ABOUT

SAY IT LOOKS GREAT!



>GASP! A BLACK CAR THAT SORTA LOOKS LIKE A BEETLE BUT ISN'T ONE! ELLIOT'S HERE!

OKAY KEEP IT COOL
HE LIKES ME I LIKE HIM,
AND I'VE CHOSEN...

A SUPER CUTE OUTFIT!

ASHLEY!
DON'T FORGET
YOUR WINTER
COAT!

EH?

HEY



ASHLEY SEEMS PRETTY NERVOUS. I WISH I KNEW WHAT TO SAY

I GUESS THAT'S NATURAL. THIS IS OUR FIRST DATE.

I GUESS A BETTER QUESTION IS WHY I'M NOT MORE NERVOUS?

I'M ON A DATE WITH SOMEONE I JUST MET THIS WEEK, AND I'M COOL AS A WATERMELON IN SUNGLASSES OVER HERE

IT MUST BE BECAUSE I ALREADY KNOW SHE LIKES ME FROM THE REVIEW SHOW AND SHE ALREADY KNOWS AND LIKES THAT I TURN INTO A GIRL!

WHAT'S TO BE NERVOUS ABOUT?

I MEAN, YEAH. SHOW-ME ISN'T EXACTLY ME-ME. I'M NOT ACTING, BUT I AM "ON" FOR THE CAMERA, AND WE DO SOME EDITING.

WHAT SHE'S REALLY FAMILAR WITH IS, LIKE, A COOLER HYPER-CHARGED VERSION OF ME.

AND SHE REALLY DID LIKE ME TRANSFORMING

LIKE A LOT

IS SHE BISEXUAL? DOES SHE WANT TO DO THINGS WITH ME WHILE I'M A GIRL?

IS THAT SOMETHING I WANT?



I STILL CAN'T
BELIEVE ELIJOT JUST
ASKED A GIRL OUT
LIKE THAT

YEAH AH, QUITE
UNEXPECTED.

SERIOUSLY! I MEAN, YOU KNOW HOW
HE IS BETTER THAN ANYONE HOW
WEIRD IS IT THAT HE'S ON A DATE WITH
SOMEONE HE JUST MET THIS WEEK?

PRETTY WEIRD! BUT I'D RATHER TALK
ABOUT THIS DATE WE'RE ON NOW

OH, JH--

WHAT DATE?
YOU'RE NOT
ON A DATE!

SAYS
WHO?

SAYS ME? YOU ASKED
IF I WANTED TO HELP YOU
SOLVE A MYSTERY!

OR REWRITE
HISTORY?

WHAT
ARE
YOU--

I'VE MADE
A TERRIBLE
MISTAKE

**DUCKTALES!
WOO-OOH!**

WE'RE AT
THE MALL!

AND I'M STILL A
MARSHMALLOW!

I KNOW HE THINKS MY
COAT IS CUTE BUT THE
SUPER CUTE OUTFIT UNDER
IT IS SUPER CUTE!

IS IT OKAY IF
I LEAVE MY COAT
IN YOUR CAR?

IF YOU WANT
TO BUT IT'S COLD
OUT THERE

IT'S COLD OUT
THERE, BUT IT'S
WARM IN THE MALL.
A QUICK WALK IN
THE COLD IS WORTH
NOT BEING TOO
WARM IN THE
MALL, RIGHT?

HUH THAT'S A
GOOD POINT. WE'RE
GOING TO BE INSIDE
WAY LONGER THAN
OUTSIDE

EXACTLY!

HECK, I'M GOING
TO LEAVE MY COAT IN
THE CAR, TOO!

SMART
MOVE!

Y-Y YOUR
O-OUTFIT I-IS
S-SUPER CUTE.

TH-THANKS!

YES

I'M PRETTY HUNGRY I HOPE SHE WANTS TO EAT FIRST

DO YOU WANT TO WANDER AROUND THE MALL OR GET FOOD FIRST?

FOOD. I WAS SO BUSY CHOOSING AN OUTFIT I MISSED LUNCH! BUT IF HE'S NOT HUNGRY YET

WHICHEVER YOU'D PREFER IS FINE.

CRAP THAT DOESN'T SOUND LIKE SOMETHING A HUNGRY PERSON WOULD SAY

WE COULD CHECK OUT SOME STORES ON OUR WAY TO THE FOOD COURT?

SOUNDS GREAT!

GRUNIBLE

GROWL

OR WE COULD GO DIRECTLY TO THE FOOD COURT

OH THANK GOD.

I WAS SURPRISED
TO HEAR YOU WERE
JOINING US.

THEY ASKED, AND IT
WAS EITHER THIS, OR A
MEANINGLESS DOUBLE-
DATE WITH LUCY

I DON'T
KNOW WHO
THAT IS

LIKE YOU NEED
TO KNOW? I'M
HERE WHATEVER.
LET'S SOLVE A
MYSTERY

AND NO
REWRITING
HISTORY!

MAGIC POWER
OR DUCKTALES?

DUCKTALES.

WOO-
OOGH.

PROBABLY
FOR THE
BEST

WHY DID
YOU INVITE
DIANE?

SHE'S SMART
KNOWS MAGIC IS
REAL, AND WE
NEEDED A RIDE.

AND I WANT
TO GET TO
KNOW HER
BETTER.

AND I WANT
TO KEEP HER
OCCUPIED DURING
ELLIOT'S DATE

FOR THE PAST COUPLE OF MONTHS THERE HAVE BEEN MULTIPLE SIGHTINGS THROUGHOUT MOPERVILLE AND NEIGHBORING AREAS OF A SPOOKY CLOAKED FIGURE WITH A FEMININE, BUT SOMEWHAT SPOOKY, VOICE

MORE SPECIFICALLY A COUPLE OF WITNESSES DESCRIBED HER VOICE AS SOUNDING LIKE A LOW FEMININE GROWL.



SHE'S SAID VERY LITTLE. MOST OF THE TIME, SHE'S SIMPLY FLED AFTER BEING SEEN.

OTHER TIMES, HOWEVER, SHE'S SHOWN HERSELF LONG ENOUGH TO ASK YOUNG ADULT MEN THEIR NAMES BEFORE RUNNING OFF

THIS SOUNDS "SPOOKY" AND ALL, CHARLOTTE BUT IT ALSO SOUNDS LIKE SOME JACKASS IN A CLOAK

IT'S PROBABLY JUST A DUMB PRANK



I WOULD HAVE AGREED WITH YOU, DIANE, PRIOR TO TWO DAYS AGO WHICH WAS WHEN PEOPLE FINALLY GOT PICTURES OF HER.



OKAY YEEEAH, THAT DOES NOT LOOK RIGHT

OKAY! SO WHERE DO WE START OUR SPOOKY MAYBE-LADY IN A CLOAK HUNT?

BY READING THESE VARIOUS ARTICLES I'M ABOUT TO E-MAIL TO YOU THREE AND FIGURING OUT WHATEVER WE CAN.

DIANE, I WILL NEED YOUR E-MAIL ADDRESS.

WE'RE JUST GOING TO READ?

AND SHARE IDEAS, BRAINSTORM, ETCETERA. I CAN PRINT OUT THE ARTICLES IF YOU'D FIND THAT EASIER TO READ.

IT'S NOT EXCITING, BUT CHARLOTTE'S RIGHT WE NEED TO FIGURE OUT WHAT HER DEAL IS AND WHERE SHE MIGHT BE.

WHAT DID YOU THINK WE WERE GOING TO DO? RUN AROUND RANDOM PLACES UNTIL WE BUMP INTO THAT THING?

BUT
READING,
THOUGH.

OH HEY A BOOKSTORE!
WE SHOULD REMEMBER WHERE THAT IS FOR AFTER WE EAT

EEP.

THIS IS THE PART OF OUR DATE WHEN I WANT TO SAY SOMETHING CLEVER ABOUT THE WIDE VARIETY OF FOOD BEFORE US BECAUSE IT'S OUR FIRST DATE AND I WANT TO SOUND CLEVER. BUT I'M TOO HUNGRY

FOOD.

HA HA HA HA



I WAS THINKING OF EITHER GETTING CHICKEN TERIYAKI FROM THE JAPANESE PLACE.

EHH, CHILLAX KNEE JERK REACTION HE'S NOT TRYING TO IMPRESS ME BY CHOOSING ASIAN FOOD.

OR MAYBE ORANGE CHICKEN FROM THE CHINESE PLACE

AT LEAST I DON'T THINK HE IS? HE WOULDN'T RIGHT?



OR PIZZA FROM THE--

I'M FROM CALIFORNIA!

--ITALIAN... PLACE?

OOPS.

UH... I LIKE PASTA?



I... THINK
THEY HAVE
PASTA...?

I'M SORRY I
HAD A KNEE-JERK
REACTION TO YOU
LISTING ASIAN
PLACES.

HALF THE FOOD
PLACES HERE ARE
ASIAN.

I KNOW IT'S
JUST... A LOT
OF PEOPLE HAVE
MADE A LOT OF
ASSUMPTIONS
ABOUT ME AND
MY FAMILY

MY FAMILY'S BEEN IN
AMERICA FOR GENERATIONS
AND MY ACCENT IS TOTALLY
AMERICAN AND SOME
PEOPLE STILL ACT LIKE I
MUST'VE JUST GOTTEN OFF
THE BUS FROM ASIA!

SOMEONE ONCE BUMPED
INTO ME AND TOLD ME TO
LEARN ENGLISH. I ONLY
KNOW ENGLISH! I TRIED TO
LEARN SPANISH, BUT I KEPT
FALLING ASLEEP IN CLASS!

I'M SORRY I
DIDN'T THINK
ABOUT WHAT
LISTING THOSE
FIRST MIGHT
SOUND LIKE

NO. I'M
SORRY YOU
DIDN'T DO
ANYTHING
WRONG. IT
WAS JUST A
KNEE-JERK
REACTION.

IT'S ALL GOOD.
PEOPLE CAN
REALLY BE THAT
BAD ABOUT IT?

YOU'D BE AMAZED
HOW MANY PEOPLE
ASSUME I'M SOME
SORT OF MAGICAL
MARTIAL ARTIST

EW.

Achoo!



THIS CLOAKED JERK'S BEEN ALL OVER THE PLACE! MAYBE ONE OF THE THREE GENIUSES I'M SURROUNDED BY WILL FIND A PATTERN IN THIS MESS, BUT THERE'S NO WAY I'M GOING TO.

I REALLY WOULD HAVE A BETTER CHANCE JUST CHECKING RANDOM PLACES.

...

HELL, ELLIOT HAS A BETTER CHANCE OF FINDING HER THAN I DO! AT LEAST HE'S OUT IN PUBLIC SOMEWHERE!

THE PROBLEM WITH ITALIAN FOOD IS THE TEMPTATION TO ORDER MY WEIGHT IN GARLIC BREAD.

MAYBE WE COULD SPLIT A YOU-SIZED LOAF?

UH, HANG ON, I THINK I JUST GOT A TEXT?

Hey, Elliot! If you see some big weird cloaked thing, text me, okay? Thanks

BZZ BZZ

And try to get a picture of it! D

BZZ BZZ

Compliment Ashley's hair >:-)

EVERYTHING OKAY?

THANK YOU!

PROBABLY? I LIKE YOUR HAIR.

THIS DOES
FEEL A LITTLE
WEIRD.

I COULD SIT ON
THE OTHER SIDE OF
THE TABLE.

NO, NO,
NEXT TO ME IS
FINE. I JUST
MEAN UM.

I'VE WATCHED A
LITTLE OF YOUR
REVIEW SHOW

WELL, A FAIR
AMOUNT

EVERY
EPISODE

I SORT OF
FEEL LIKE I
KNOW YOU
ALREADY

THE "ON FOR THE
CAMERA", AND SOMETIMES
EDITED, COOLER ME

YEAH?

BUT YOU DON'T KNOW
ME THE SAME WAY

I KNOW YOU'RE
COOL AND CUTE AND
I WANT TO GET TO
KNOW YOU BETTER.

WHAT?

I CAN TELL
YOU STUFF
ABOUT ME

I THINK I
HEARD THAT
YES, PLEASE

LET'S SEE,
UM...

WELL, THE ONE
PLACE IN ASIA I'M
SURE I DON'T HAVE
ANCESTRY IS JAPAN.
BECAUSE I'M A BIG
FAN OF NINTENDO
AND ANIME AND I
WANTED TO KNOW
IF WE HAD AN
EXCUSE TO VISIT

I SHOULD
PROBABLY FIND
OUT MORE
ABOUT MY FAMILY
HISTORY AT
SOME POINT

I THINK MY
FAMILY IS FROM
EUROPE. ?

I'VE UH. READ A LOT
OF BOOKS. LIKE A LOT OF
BOOKS. I SORTA GET INTO A
ZONE WHEN I READ THEM..

AND WE KNOW
WHERE THE BOOK
STORE IS! YES.

WHAT ELSE.. UM.
OH! I PLAY BALLET
AND DANCE SOCCER!



WAIT, I
MEAN—

ONE SEC I'M
IMAGINING DANCE
SOCCER.



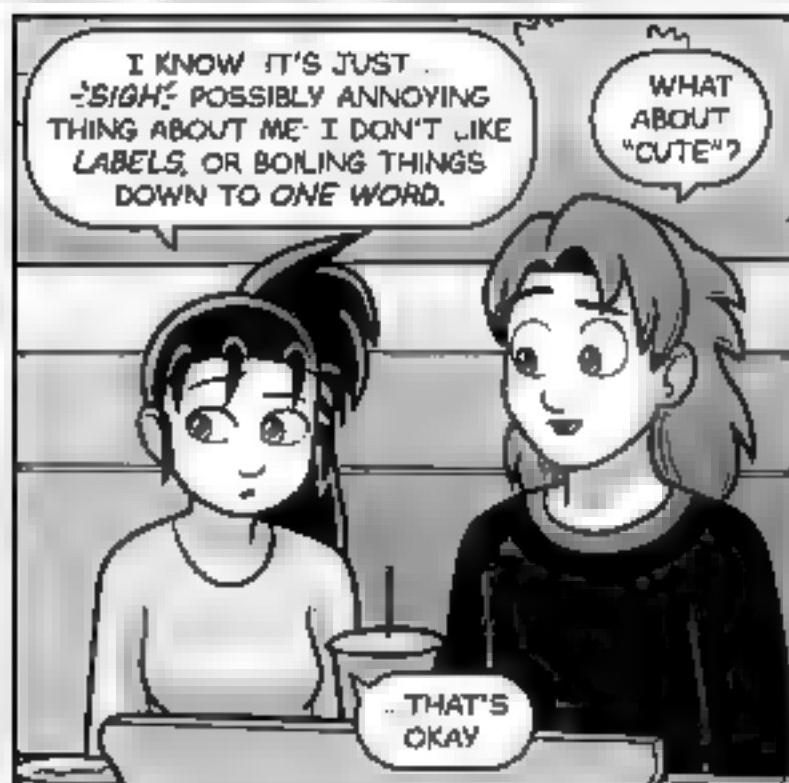


WE WERE BASICALLY JUST AN INNOCENT BARELY OLD ENOUGH TO DATE COUPLE WHO SAID SWEET THINGS AND ROLEPLAYED LIKE WE HAD TRANSFORMATION POWERS. BUT YEAH. INTERNET GIRLFRIEND.

THAT'S, UH.

FEEL FREE TO IMAGINE AN OLDER VERSION OF ME IN THAT SITUATION.

OH, UH. THANK YOU. I MEAN, NO, I MEAN.. WHAT DO I MEAN?



I THINK I SEE WHAT YOU'RE SAYING. LABELS ENCOURAGE ASSUMPTIONS AND STUFF AND THEY'RE ANNOYING, AND YOU ARE WHO YOU ARE REGARDLESS.

THAT AND PEOPLE GET INTO ARGUMENTS WHERE EVERYONE BASICALLY AGREES WITH EACH OTHER, BUT THEY DON'T REALIZE IT BECAUSE NOBODY'S DEFINED THE ONE WORD THE ARGUMENT HINGES ON.

"IS THIS VIDEO GAME RACIST? LET'S BASICALLY ARGUE ABOUT THE DEFINITION OF 'RACIST' FOR AN HOUR WHILE ALL AGREEING ON THE ACTUAL CONTENT OF THE GAME!"



GIRL SOCCER PLAYER? THAT EXPLAINS A LOT

A BALLERINA DOES NOT SAY SUCH THINGS!

YOU JUST DON'T WANT TO COMMIT TO BEING A LESBIAN.

YOU COULD SAY THAT

LOOK OUT, EVERYONE! ASIAN STUDENT DRIVER!

YOU'RE JUST A HETEROSEXUAL WHO WANTS ATTENTION.

GIRLS AREN'T HARDCORE ENOUGH TO PLAY MARIO KART

TODAY'S DEBATE TOPIC: "GEEK OR NERD: WHICH IS BETTER?"



I SORTA WANT TO GIVE YOU A SYMPATHY HUG NOW, BUT IT'S OUR FIRST DATE, AND I'LL UNDERSTAND IF

:GLOP:



PIZZA. PIZZA FOR THE BRAIN.

DOES THIS MEAN YOU'RE GOING TO ACTUALLY START INVESTIGATING LIKE THE REST OF US?

LOOK, WE ALL KNOW IF ONE OF US IS GOING TO FIND SOMETHING USEFUL IN THIS MESS, IT ISN'T GOING TO BE ME I'M HERE FOR WHEN YOU WANT SOMETHING PUNCHED.

YOU'RE NOT GIVING YOURSELF ENOUGH CREDIT ELLEN. YOU COULD NOTICE SOMETHING WE'D MISS.

nom!

NOTICE WHAT? THIS CLOAKED GIRL'S INCONSISTENT AS HECK. I CAN'T MAKE HEADS OR TAILS OF HER.

SHE SEEMS CONSISTENT TO ME. SHE IMMEDIATELY RUNS WHEN SPOTTED UNLESS ASKING FOR SOMEONE'S NAME.

EITHER SHE SLACKS OFF WHEN THERE ISN'T SOMEONE SHE WANTS TO QUESTION AROUND OR THERE'S TWO OF HER, AND ONE'S WAY BETTER AT SNEAKING THAN THE OTHER.

YEAH, SHE'S A SUPER STEALTH NINJA WHO'S ONLY SEEN WHILE ASKING SOMEONE'S NAME. EXCEPT FOR ALL THE TIMES SHE'S LEFT HERSELF TOTALLY VISIBLE ON THE EDGES OF ROOFTOPS AND STUFF?

WHAT? DID I GET SAUCE ON MY SHIRT?

nom!

nom!

nom!

nom!

nom!

nom!

ASSUMING THERE ARE TWO OF THEM, HOW DO WE PROCEED?

ZA?

IF EVERY INSTANCE OF NAME ASKING IS ONE CLOAKED FIGURE AND EVERY INSTANCE WITHOUT IS ANOTHER, WE SHOULD ORGANIZE THOSE ENCOUNTERS SEPARATELY

THEN WE CAN DETERMINE IF THE TIMING AND LOCATIONS OF THE INCIDENTS SUPPORT THERE BEING TWO OF THEM, AND HOPEFULLY NARROW DOWN WHERE EITHER OF THEM ARE LIKELY TO BE

I AGREE DIVIDING THE ENCOUNTERS IS A ONE WOMAN JOB YOU THREE CAN DEVOUR PIZZA WHILE I TAKE CARE OF IT

GOOD WORK, ELLEN.

SEE? WHAT DID I TELL YOU

YEAH, SO STOP BEING LAZY



SO, WAIT, YOU ALL THINK I'M RIGHT ABOUT THERE BEING TWO OF THEM?

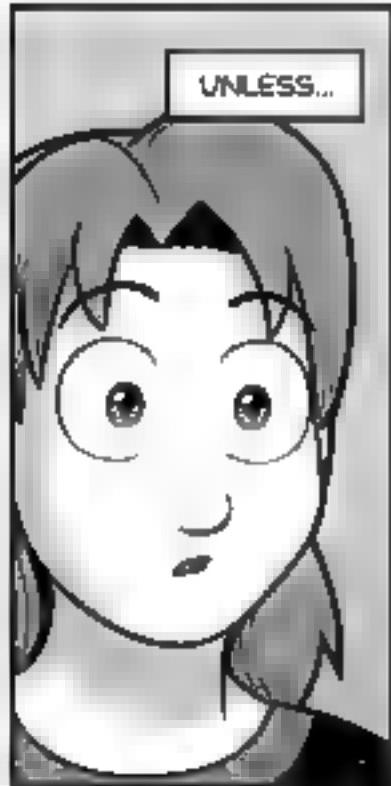
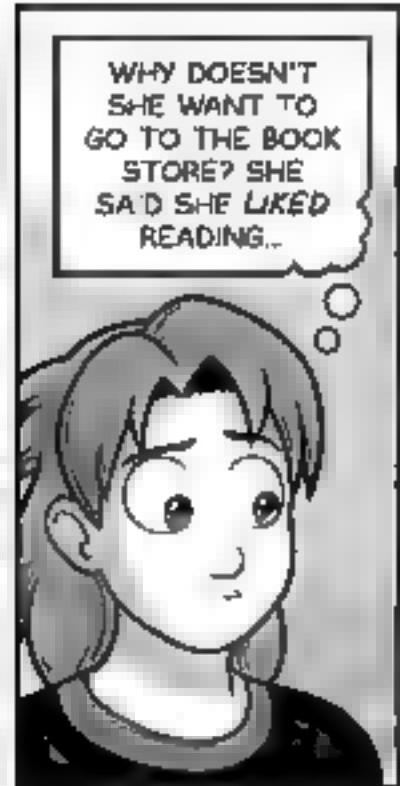
IT SURE WOULD EXPLAIN A LOT IF THERE WERE TWO OF THEM.

SHOOT, I'M GOING TO BE LAZY ALL THE TIME FOREVER NOW. IT GETS RESULTS.

SNORT







SORRY! SORRY! I WASN'T GOING TO ASK ABOUT ANYTHING LIKE THAT ON OUR FIRST DATE BUT UH...

WELL FOR YOU TO JUMP TO THAT CONCLUSION IT SORTA SUGGESTS YOU MUST HAVE A LOT OF EXPERIENCE WITH PEOPLE HAVING MAGIC POWERS AND STUFF RIGHT?

UH...



THAT'S WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU CONCLUSION JUMP, YOU IDIOT!



SERIOUSLY THE WRITING IN SOME OF THESE OLD SITCOMS.

MEREOW?

YOU SAID IT JEREMY



I UH, THERE'S STUFF I CAN TELL YOU BUT UH.

WHY DON'T WE JUST GO TO THE COOKIE PLACE FOR DESSERT INSTEAD FOR NOW?



I LIKE COOKIES...

COOKIES ARE GOOD!



WHAT ALL
CAN I TELL
ASHLEY?

SHE ALREADY KNOWS I TURN INTO
A GIRL, AND THAT I DON'T ALWAYS
HAVE A SAY IN THE MATTER. THOSE
CATS ARE OUT OF THE BAG.

AND I COULD PROBABLY TELL HER
I'M CHEERLEADERA AT SOME POINT
ASSUMING I CAN SOMEHOW EXPLAIN
THAT I DIDN'T PICK THE COSTUME.

I PRETTY MUCH JUST
BLEW THE "I KNOW
OTHER PEOPLE WITH
MAGIC, TOO" SECRET...

BUT I DON'T
THINK ASHLEY
WOULD PUSH IT
IF I SAID I
COULDN'T TELL
HER OTHER
PEOPLE'S
SECRETS.

SURRRREE YOU DIDN'T



HECK, SHE REALLY WANTS
TO KNOW ABOUT THIS
STUFF, BUT INSTEAD OF
PUSHING, WE'RE GETTING
COOKIES! SHE'S REALLY
PRETTY AWESOME

SORTA MAKES ME WANT TO
TELL HER ALL ABOUT MAGIC BUT
HOW DO I DO THAT WITHOUT
BETRAYING EVERYONE'S TRUST?

ACTUALLY, KNOWING
MY LUCK, SOMETHING
WEIRD WILL HAPPEN
AND ALL OF THIS WILL
BE RENDERED MOOT

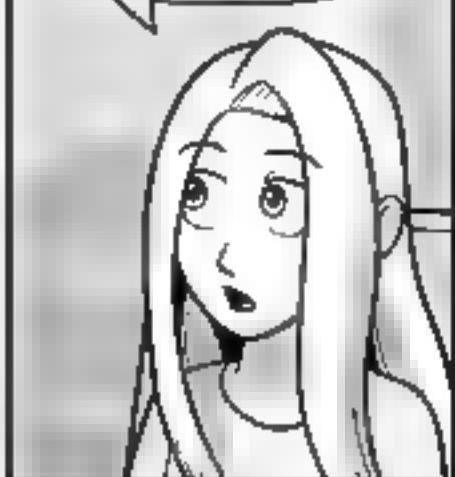
AND MAYBE
GETTING ANGRY
GOVERNMENT
WIZARDS ON
MY CASE?



WHEN WE DIVIDE THE ENCOUNTERS BY STEALTH AND NOT SO STEALTH, THE STEALTH ENCOUNTERS ARE WIDELY SCATTERED. SHE'S BEEN SEEN IN MOPERVILLE AND NEIGHBORING AREAS, AND THERE'S NO REAL PATTERN TO IT OTHER THAN MOPERVILLE BEING ROUGHLY IN THE MIDDLE OF HER SIGHTINGS.



WE HAVEN'T REALLY CONFIRMED THERE'S TWO OF THEM. THERE COULD BE ONE CLOAKED FIGURE WHO ONLY PUTS THEIR GAME FACE ON WHEN THEY'RE OUT LOOKING FOR WHATEVER.



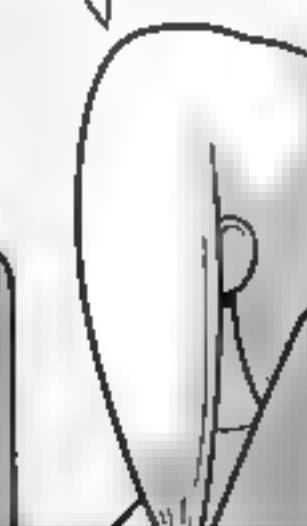
MEANWHILE NOT SO STEALTH HAS ONLY BEEN SEEN IN MOPERVILLE. IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO NARROW DOWN WHERE THEY SPEND MOST OF THEIR TIME.

"THEY"? THAT ONLY NARROWS DOWN NOT SO STEALTH.

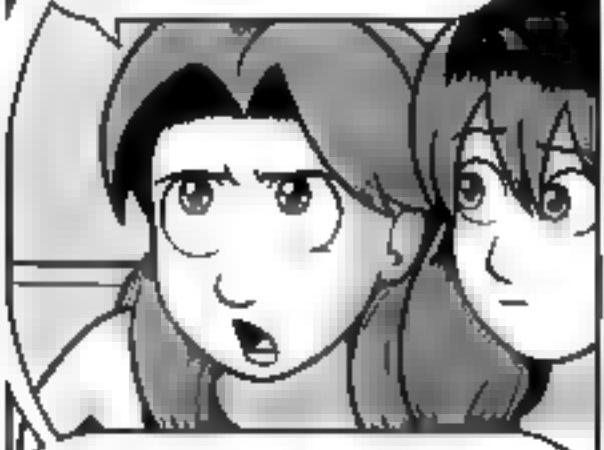
WE'RE NOT SURE THERE'S TWO OF THEM, BUT WE ARE SURE STEALTH'S LOOKING FOR SOMETHING?

SOMEONE REMEMBER? SHE'S ASKING PEOPLE'S NAMES.

AND IF THERE ARE TWO OF THEM, SHE'S PRESUMABLY NOT LOOKING FOR THE OTHER ONE.

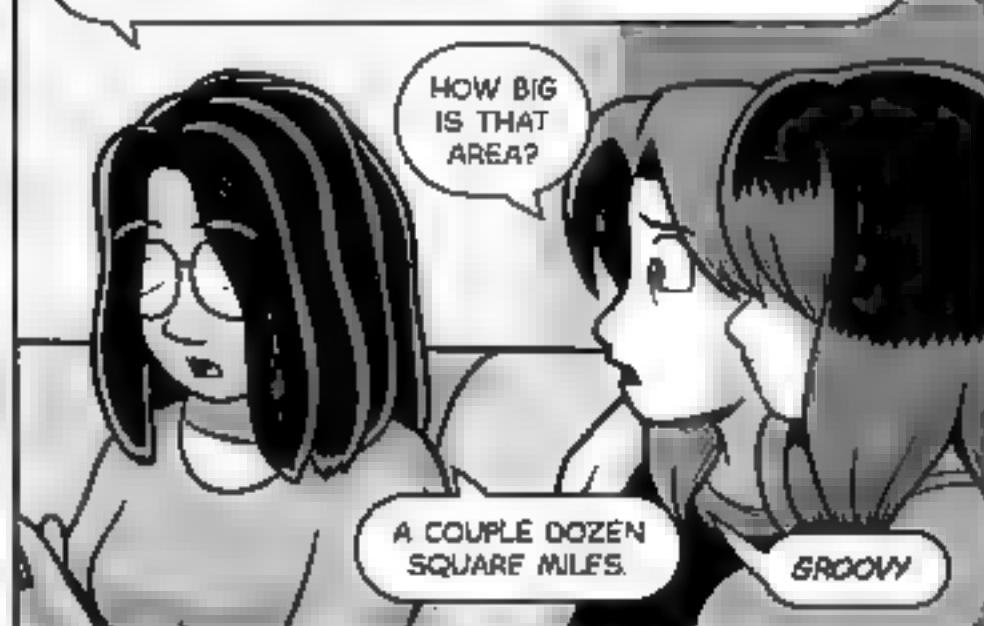


BECAUSE IT'S HARD TO MISTAKE SOME DUDE FOR A WEIRD THING IN A CLOAK.



SO THERE'S ONE OR TWO OF THEM, AND THEY'RE LOOKING FOR SOMEONE SPECIFIC, BUT THEY ONLY HAVE A VAGUE IDEA WHAT THEY LOOK LIKE AND WHERE THEY ARE.

EITHER WAY IF WE LIMIT OUR ANALYSIS TO THE AREA WHERE NOT SO STEALTH'S BEEN SEEN, WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO FIGURE OUT WHERE THEY'RE LIKELY TO BE.



HOW BIG IS THAT AREA?

A COUPLE DOZEN SQUARE MILES.

GROOVY



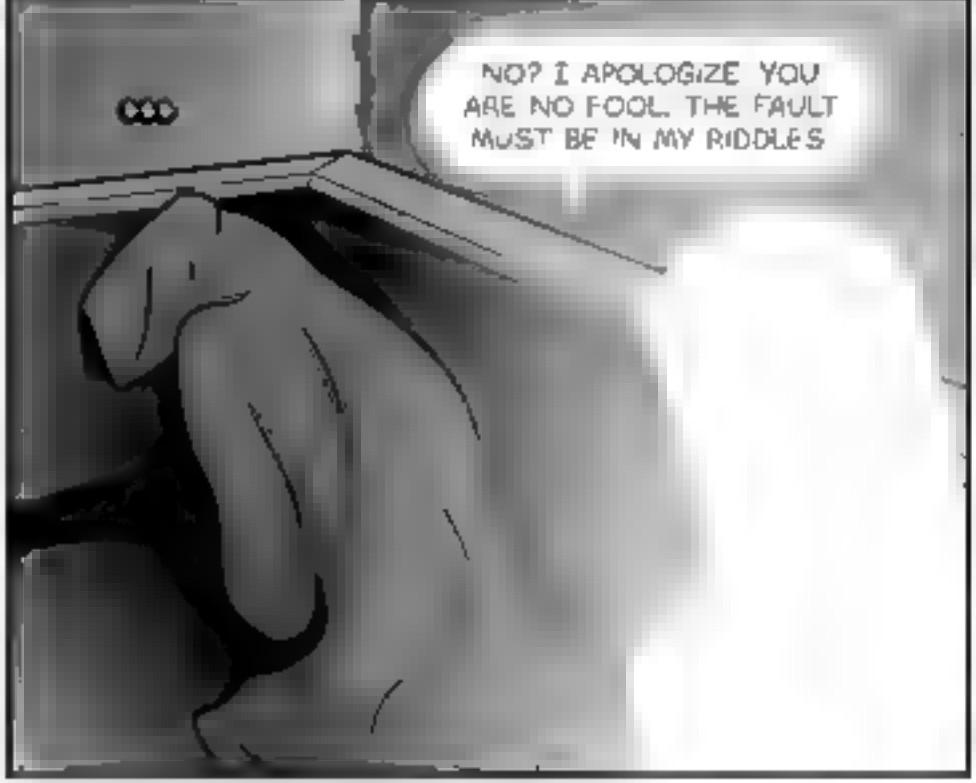
MY GOODNESS
YOU'RE **STILL** ON
THIS HALF OF
THE EARTH?



YOU HAVEN'T FOUND
HER YET THEN. I'M
SORRY I KNOW NOTHING
OF WHERE SHE IS.



HAVE YOU AT
LEAST FOUND
THE YOUNG
MAN YET?



NO? I APOLOGIZE YOU
ARE NO FOOL THE FAULT
MUST BE IN MY RIDDLES

I KNOW WHERE HE IS
RIGHT NOW I SHALL
GIVE YOU ANOTHER



I WANT TO KNOW EVERYTHING YOU COULD TELL ME.

I REALLY REALLY WANT TO KNOW I BET IT'S AMAZING AND AWESOME AND—

SETTLE SETTLE DOWN ASHLEY



BUT ONE OF THE REASONS I LIKE YOU SO MUCH IS HOW GOOD A PERSON YOU ARE.

I DON'T EVER WANT YOU TO DO ANYTHING WRONG ON MY ACCOUNT

I... I TRY TO BE A GOOD PERSON, YEAH. OKAY

I WON'T TELL YOU ANYTHING I'M NOT SURE ABOUT

THANK YOU



THOUGH I'M PRETTY SURE I'M NOT BETRAYING ANYONE'S TRUST BY TELLING YOU ABOUT ALL MY OWN TRANSFORMATION ABILITIES.

ABILITIES? PLURAL?

I CAN MOSTLY ONLY TURN INTO A GIRL BUT I CAN CHOOSE WHAT I LOOK LIKE WHEN I DO I CAN CHANGE MY CLOTHES A LOT TOO

REALLY?

YEAH

WOW



YOU KNOW I HAVE
TO TRANSFORM EVERY SO
OFTEN OR IT HAPPENS
INVOLUNTARILY ANYWAY

THAT'S WHAT
HAPPENED AT
SCHOOL
RIGHT?



YEAH I'M PRETTY SURE I'M OKAY TONIGHT BUT
MAYBE JUST TO BE ON THE SAFE SIDE WE
SHOULD FIND A PLACE I CAN CHANGE WITHOUT
BEING SEEN AND

THE MEN'S ROOM!
YOU CAN TRANSFORM
WHILE IN A STALL



I UM WAS ACTUALLY
TRYING TO HINT AT FINDING
SOMEWHERE YOU COULD
WATCH ME TRANSFORM

OH! YOU
YOU WANT
TO?



SURE AND IF THERE'S
ACTUALLY A SAFE
PLACE TO DO T

THE BOOK
STORE. I KNOW
ALL OF ITS
SECURITY BLIND
SPOTS!



BECAUSE I READ MORE
THAN I SHOULD WHILE THERE
AND IT'S NOT A LIBRARY

OH...



T'S JNL KELY
WE'RE GOING TO
FIND NOT SO
STEALTH HERE

HOW ARE YOU
NARROWING IT
DOWN?

EEP!

SORRY
IT'S REALLY DIFFICULT TO
FOCUS WITH YOU AS A FAIRY
ALL I CAN THINK IS "WHY AM I
LOOKING AT MY PHONE? THERE'S
A FAIRY IN MY APARTMENT!"

SORRY! IT'S JUST DIANE
ASKED HOW YOU KNEW I
HAD MAGIC AND THEN THE
FAIRY DOLL SPELL CAME
UP... I CAN STOP IF IT'S
DISTRACTING YOU.

BUT IT'S
SO COOL!

I MEAN, WHATEVER. I DON'T
CARE. YOU'RE JUST IN TWO
PLACES AT ONCE AND A FAIRY

I CAN ALSO
MAKE A SEMI-
AUTONOMOUS
DOUBLE OF
MYSELF

SHUT THE
S#%! UP

I REALLY CAN!

PROVE IT

YOU SHOULD PROBABLY
JUST TAKE A BREAK WITH
THE REST OF US.

YOU REALLY
KNOW ALL THE
SECURITY BLIND
SPOTS IN THIS
STORE?



YEAH
PRETTY SURE
I USUALLY BUY
ANY BOOKS I
ZONE OUT
ON

I'M NOT
JUDGING I
JUST YOU
KNOW WANNA
BE SURE

THOUGH
THAT IS
GOOD

RIGHT RIGHT
THIS IS A BIT
OF A CAPER,
SH*T IT?

T IS A BIT
MISCHIEVOUS
AND NAUGHTY



MAYBE WE
SHOULDN'T
DO IT

IT'S PROBABLY A
BAD IDEA BUT T'S
EXCITING AND I
DO WANT TO



WELL LET'S
DO IT THEN LIVE
ON THE EDGE! BE
REBELS

YEAH!



WE'D BETTER
FINISH OUR COOKIES
FIRST THERE'S NO
FOOD OR DRINKS
ALLOWED IN THERE

RIGHT



WAIT, I'M SORRY I REALLY
WOULD LIKE TO KNOW HOW
YOU'RE NARROWING DOWN
POSSIBLE LOCATIONS.

THE CLOAKED
FIGURE IN THAT
PICTURE DOESN'T
APPEAR TO BE
HUMAN, MAKING IT
UNLIKELY THEY HAVE
A RESIDENCE OR
HOTEL ROOM TO
RETURN TO.

WITHOUT MUCH
ELSE TO GO ON, I'M
ASSUMING THEY'LL
ROUTINELY RETURN
TO A LOCATION THAT
RELIABLY PROVIDES
FOOD, WATER, AND
SOME SORT OF
SHELTER.

THAT
MAKES SENSE
ESPECIALLY NOW,
WITH IT BEING
WINTER.

SO SOMEWHERE
WITH FOOD, WATER,
AND PROBABLY NEAR
BUILDINGS FOR
WARMTH AND
SHELTER.

AND SOMEWHERE THEY
CAN RELIABLY HIDE OR,
TRY TO, ANYWAY THIS
IS NOT SO STEALTH
WE'RE TAKING ABOUT

DOESN'T A RIVER WITH
FOREST AREAS AROUND
IT RUN THROUGH DOWNTOWN
MOPERVILLE?

THERE'S LOTS
OF BUILDINGS,
RESTAURANTS, AND
PLACES TO HIDE
THERE

DID I ACCIDENTLY
MAYBE SOLVE
ANOTHER THING?

YES.

AND IT'S CLOSE TO BEING RIGHT
IN THE MIDDLE OF ALL THE NOT
SO STEALTH SIGHTINGS.

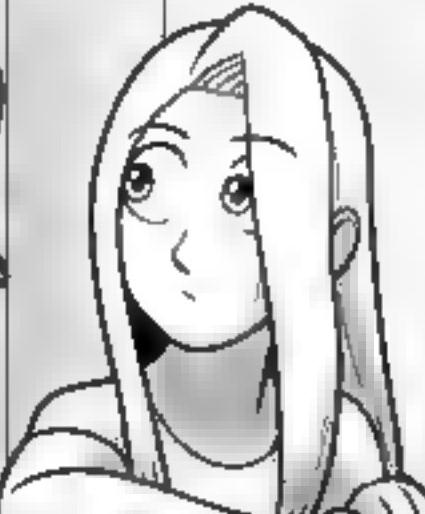
AND ALL
WHILE ON
BREAK.

NONE OF YOU ARE ABOUT TO SUGGEST WE START WANDERING AROUND DOWNTOWN MOPERVILLE LOOKING FOR THESE THINGS. ARE YOU?

I WOULD BUT I'M GOING TO QUIT WHILE I'M AHEAD AND NOT SAY ANYTHING.

EVEN IF WE'RE RIGHT IT'S STILL A LARGE AREA TO CHECK, AND THEY MIGHT NOT EVEN BE THERE WHEN WE ARE

I'D TRY LOOKING AROUND AS A FAIRY IF IT WERE WARMER, BUT I'D PROBABLY FREEZE IN THIS WEATHER.

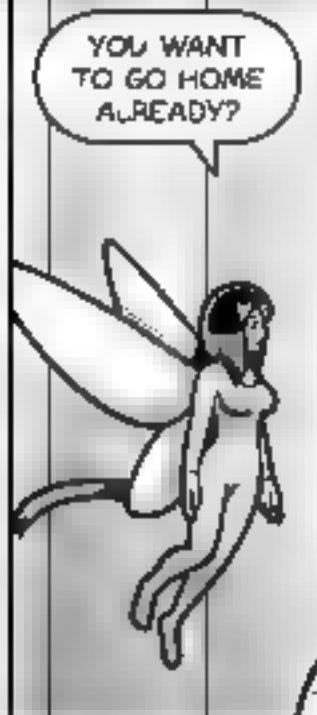


THAT AND IT'S PROBABLY BAD FORM TO FLY AROUND BARS AT NIGHT

I THINK WE'RE AT THE POINT WHERE WE SEND OUR CONJECTURE TO YOUR UNCLE AND CALL IT A NIGHT

YOU WANT TO GO HOME ALREADY?

I WANT US TO ACCEPT THAT WE'VE DONE ALL WE CAN REASONABLY DO FOR NOW



AND THEN I WANT TO SEE IF YOU CAN BEAT YOUR SO-CALLED "SEMI-AUTONOMOUS DOUBLE" AT MARIO KART

SECONDED.



OKAY

SO

UH

IF YOU'VE
CHANGED YOUR
MIND THAT'S
OKAY

NO NO IT'S JUST
SHOULD I TRANSFORM
LIKE WHEN YOU FIRST
SAW ME OR UH
ANY REQUESTS?

REQUESTS?

YEAH I CAN
CHOOSE WHAT I LOOK
LIKE REMEMBER?

WELL UM I'VE
NEVER TALKED ABOUT
MY TRANSFORMATION
PREFERENCES WITH
ANYONE NOT IN
PERSON, ANYWAY

YOU'RE NOT
GOING TO WEIRD
ME OUT TRUST
ME ON THIS

WELL UH I I USUALLY LIKE HIGH
CONTRAST LIKE A BIG DIFFERENCE BETWEEN
BEFORE AND AFTER WITH WHATEVER'S UM
DIFFERENT REALLY STANDING OUT

SO UM MAYBE
LONG PINK HAIR
AND ABOUT MY
SIZE? MAYBE A
LITTLE SMALLER?
IS THAT OKAY?

THAN YOU UH T
SHOULD BE BUT IS
IT OKAY IF I LOOK A
LITTLE LIKE YOU?

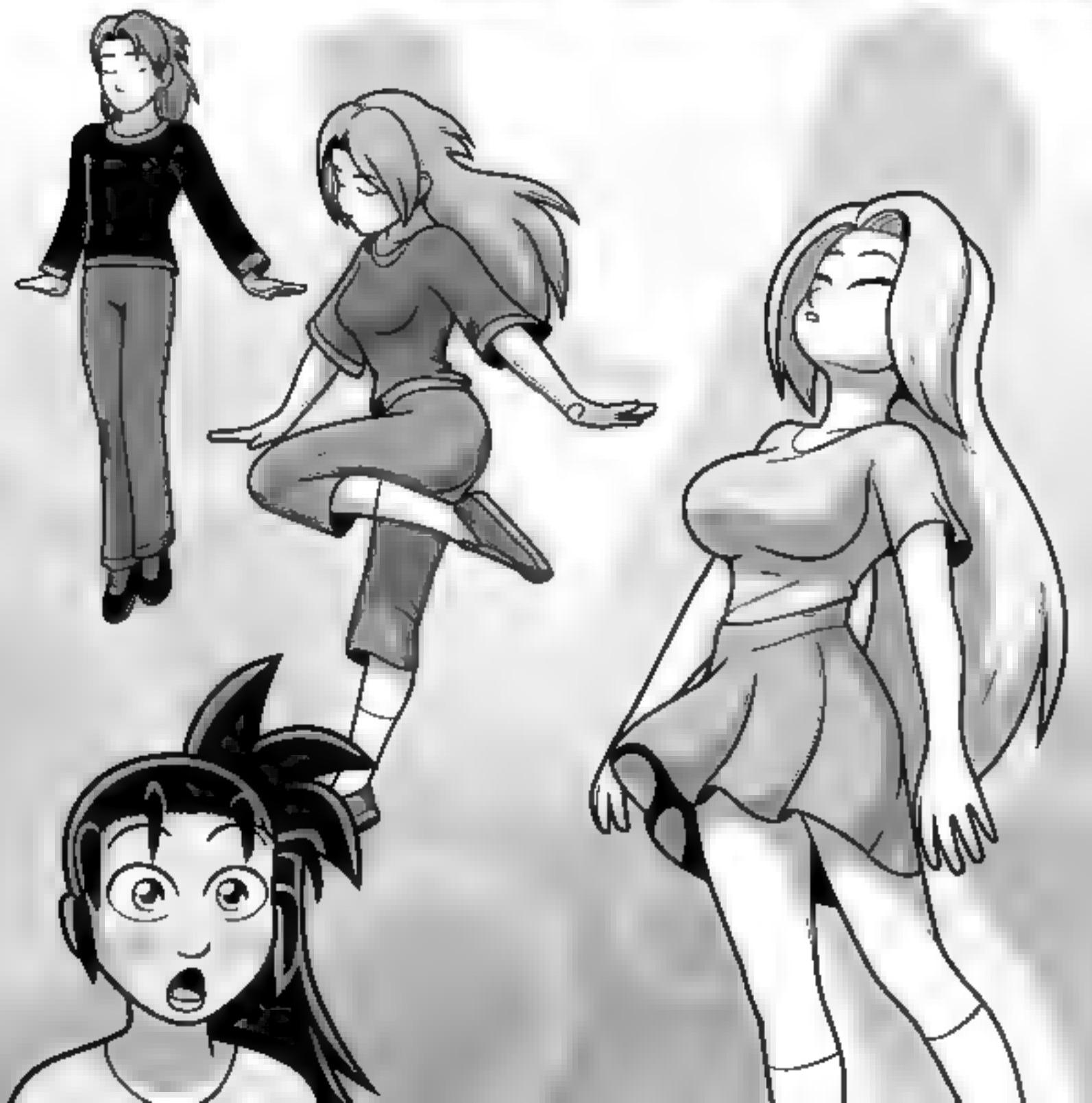


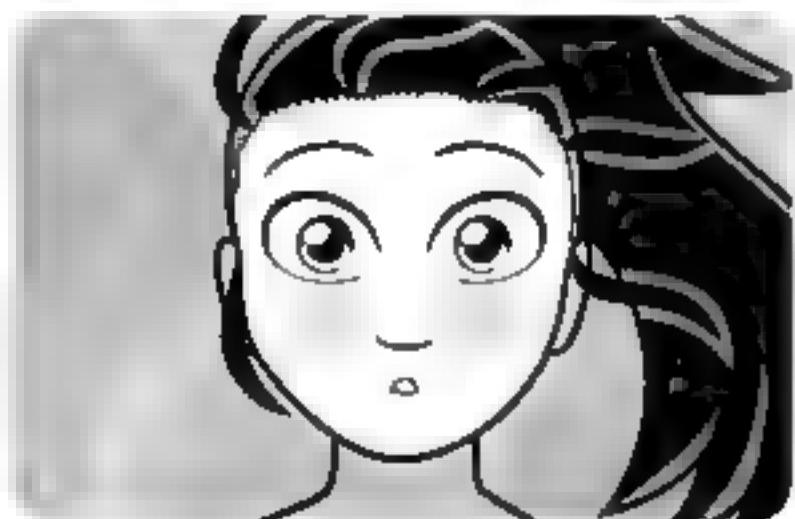
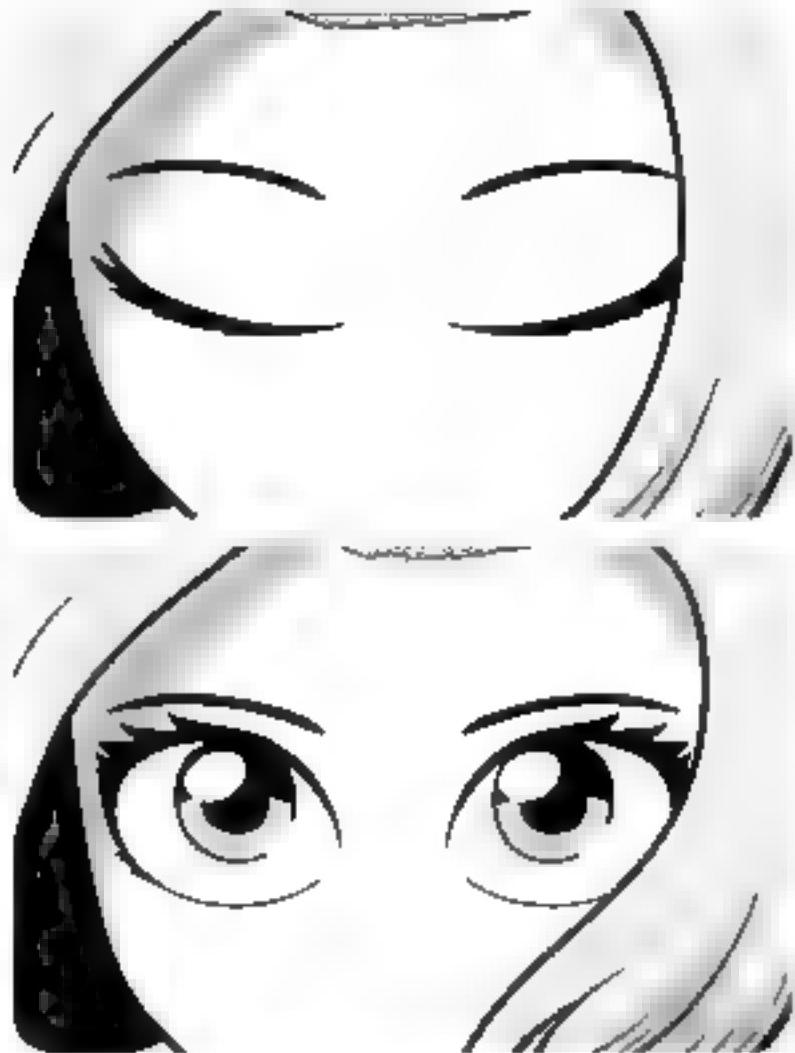
SORRY SORRY
SHOULD I TALK
ABOUT MODEST
FIGURES FOR
A BIT?

NO NO
T'S FINE JH
S THE COAST
CLEAR?

SEEMS
TO BE

I'M
GOING FOR
T THEN





I'VE HEARD
THAT IF YOU DRINK
ENOUGH, YOU SEE
FAIRIES!

SURE YOU
DO. DID YOU
SNEAK SOME
DRINKS
ALREADY?



WHAT WAS
THAT?! A RING
WRAITH?!

DAMN LARPERS.

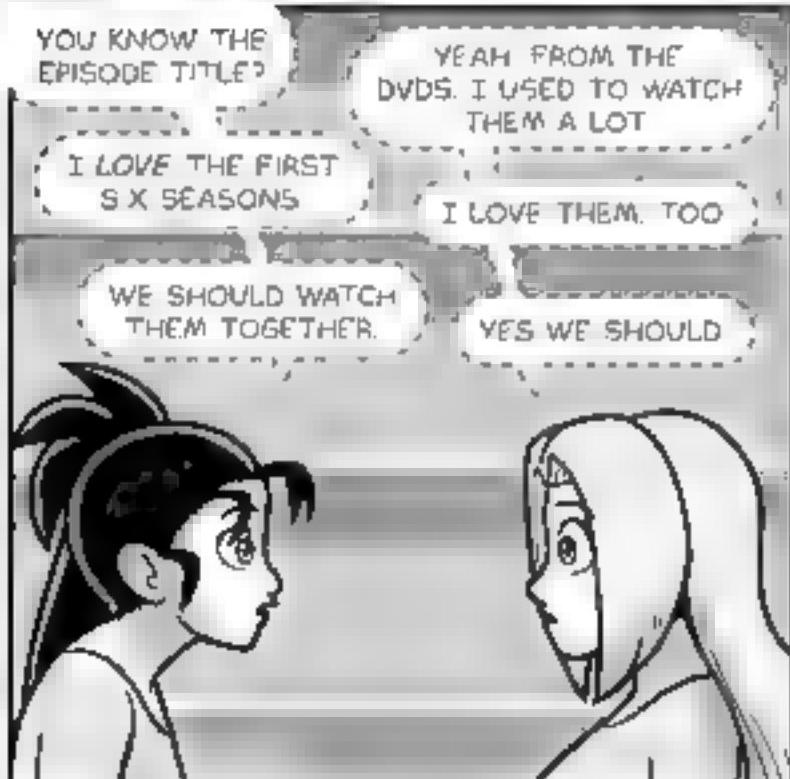


Castle of
commerce to
the west.

With potential mate.

GERMAN
DARK.





I CAN'T GET OVER
HOW SMALL YOU ARE
WELL, MOST OF YOU.

YEAH, I'D
SAY YOUR
SABOTAGE WAS
SUCCESSFUL.

UH, YEAH, SORRY
ABOUT THAT...

DON'T
WORRY
ABOUT
IT

SOMETIMES
. IT HAPPENS
WITHOUT
SABOTAGE

IS THIS
WEIRD FOR
YOU?

IT FEELS LIKE
EVERYTHING ELSE
IS BIGGER, BUT I'M
USED TO THAT

I MEANT
BEING A
GIRL

OH, JH, SORT
OF? BEING A GIRL
ISN'T WEIRD BUT I'M
NOT USUALLY IN
PUBLIC LIKE THIS

BUT YOU'RE
OKAY WITH IT
RIGHT?

YEAH I AM. IT'S
ACTUALLY SORT OF
LIBERATING KNOWING
THAT NO ONE CAN
RECOGNIZE ME

EXCEPT FOR ME
OF COURSE

WHICH IS WHY
I'M NOT DANCING
TO THE MALL MUSIC
RIGHT NOW

IT'S TOO BAD YOU CAN'T
TRANSFORM ME TOO
WE COULD BE DANCING
FOOLS TOGETHER

I'M PRETTY
SURE I CAN'T
BESIDES YOU
WOULDN'T LOOK
FOOLISH YOU
KNOW BALLET

I ASSURE YOU I CAN
LOOK WAIT YOU'RE "PRETTY
SURE" YOU CAN'T?

EH
THAT'S
"COMPLICATED"

RIGHT OF COURSE SO JH
YOU'RE REALLY COMFORTABLE
WITH BEING A GIRL?

BOY GIRL WHATEVS
I GUESS SOMETIMES I
FEEL MORE LIKE BEING
ONE THAN THE OTHER

AND THERE ARE SOME
WEIRD THINGS ABOUT
T LIKE I THINK I SEE
MORE SHADES OF RED
WHEN I'M A GIRL

YOU
SEE MORE
RED?

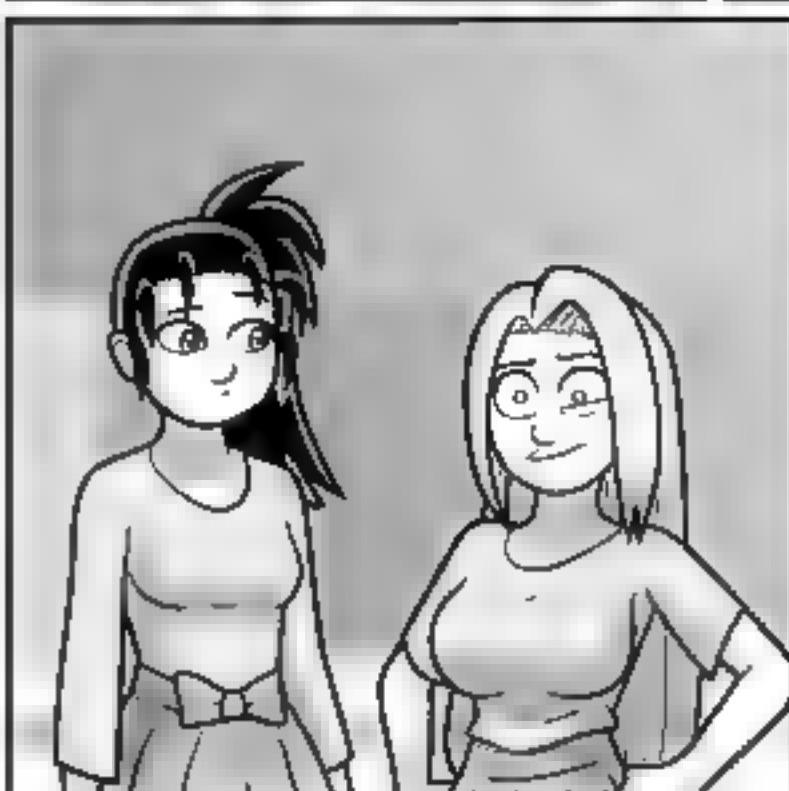
PRETTY SURE SOME
REDS THAT LOOK THE
SAME WHEN I'M A
GUY LOOK DIFFERENT
WHEN I'M A GIRL

HUH

WALKING'S ALSO
SORTA DIFFERENT BUT T'S
FINE SO LONG AS I DON'T
THINK ABOUT

TRIP:

THWUMP



YOU'RE SURE THEY
DON'T HAVE CAMERAS
IN THE DRESSING
ROOMS?

YEAH. THEY
CAN'T HAVE THEM
WITHOUT SIGNS
TELLING YOU

OKAY
LET'S GO.

I'LL STAND
GUARD OUT
HERE

WHAT?
WHAT?

YOU'RE NOT
COMING IN WITH
ME?

WHY NOT?

I CAN'T GO IN
THERE WITH YOU

IT'S A DRESSING
ROOM!

YEAH, BUT IT'S NOT
LIKE I'M GOING TO DO
ANY DRESSING

THEN WHY ARE YOU
WORRIED ABOUT..?

BECAUSE IT'S WEIRD
TO GO IN A DRESSING
ROOM AND NOT-

WHAT YOU
THOUGHT I
WAS?

WELL I JUST.. I
FIGURED THAT HOW'S
TAKING A PEEK NOT THE
FIRST THING ANYONE DOES
AFTER TRANSFORMING!?

WELL I
I MEAN I'M
NOT GOING
TO CLAIM I
HAVEN'T DONE
THAT BUT

IT IS ONE THOUSAND
PERCENT WHAT I WOULD
DO IF TRANSFORMED
WITH A NEW FORM.

OKAY YEAH
IT'S NATURAL, BUT
WE'RE ON A DATE
CHECKING OUT
MYSELF IN A
MIRROR THAT WAY
SN'T DATELY

MAYBE NOT
NORMALLY BUT THESE
ARE SPECIAL SUPER COOL
CIRCUMSTANCES THAT
I'M OKAY WITH.

I'M NOT WE'RE ON
A DATE WE SHOULD BE
IN THERE TOGETHER!

NOT PEAKING
TOGETHER! JUST ME
SEEING WHAT I LOOK
LIKE IN THE MIRROR
TOGETHER

RIGHT!
RIGHT

OF COURSE THIS ISN'T
REALLY WHAT I LOOK
LIKE I GUESS THERE SN'T
REALLY ANYTHING TO BE
MODEST ABOUT BUT...

THAT'S.
OH



THIS IS QUICKLY
GETTING OUT OF
HAND

AGREED

THERE'S NOTHING FOR
ME TO BE MODEST ABOUT
BUT IT'S STILL A BAD
IDEA BECAUSE JIM

REASONS!

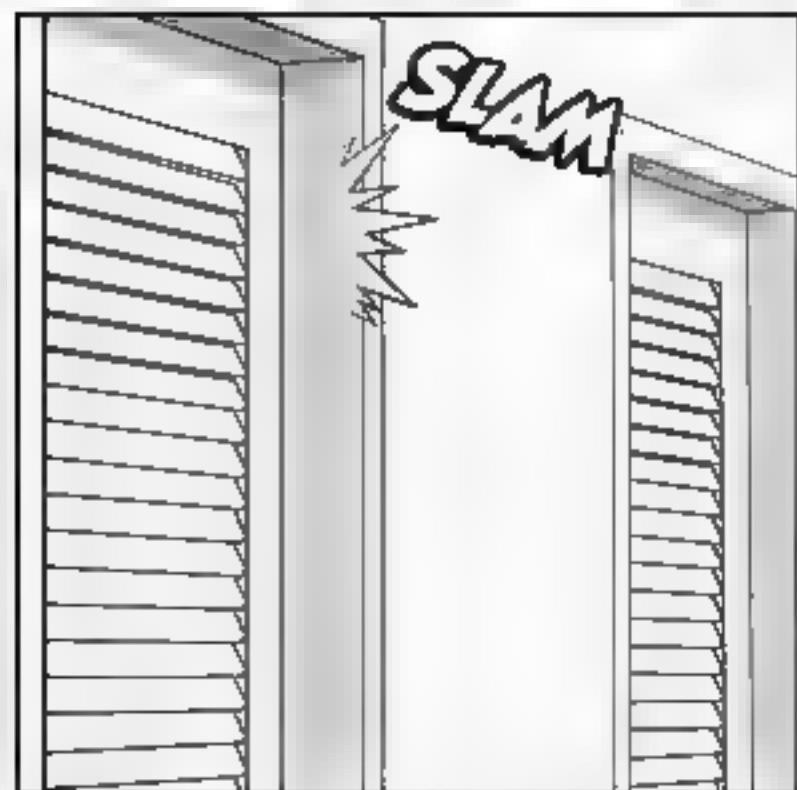
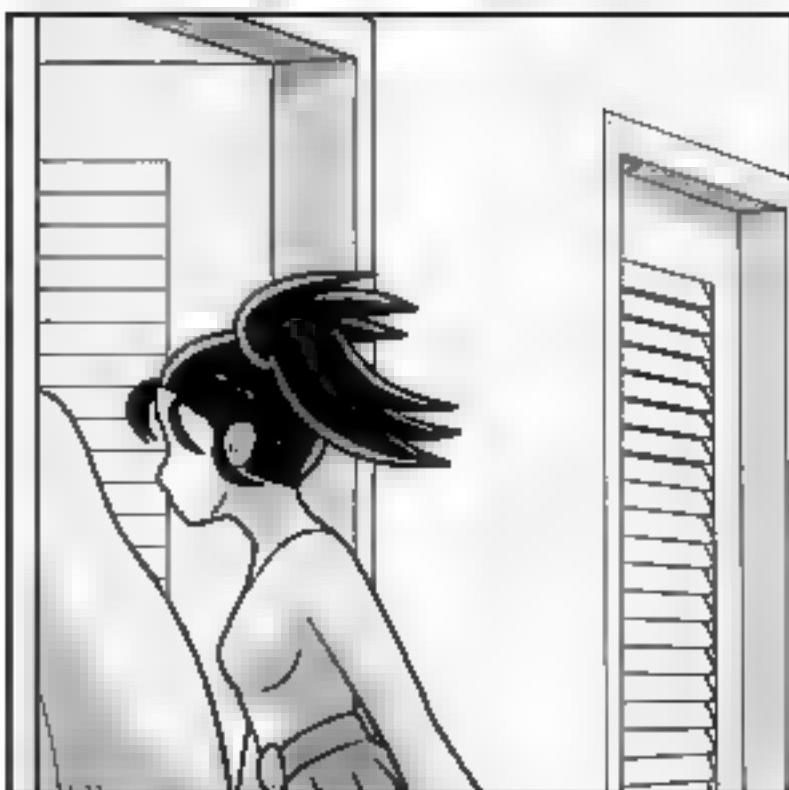
REASONS. GOOD
REASONS. THERE ARE
A LOT OF THOSE

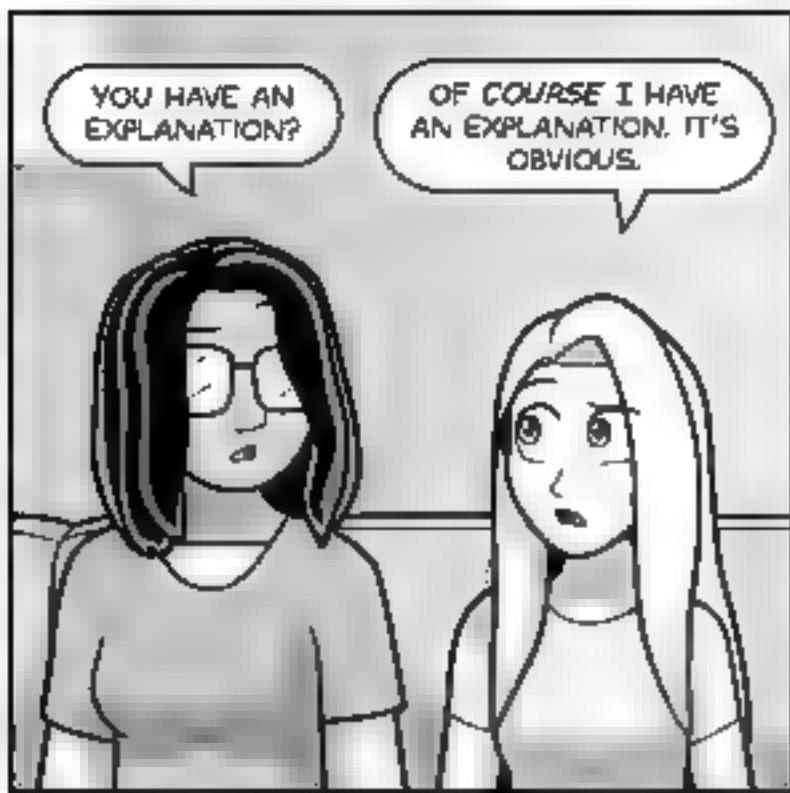
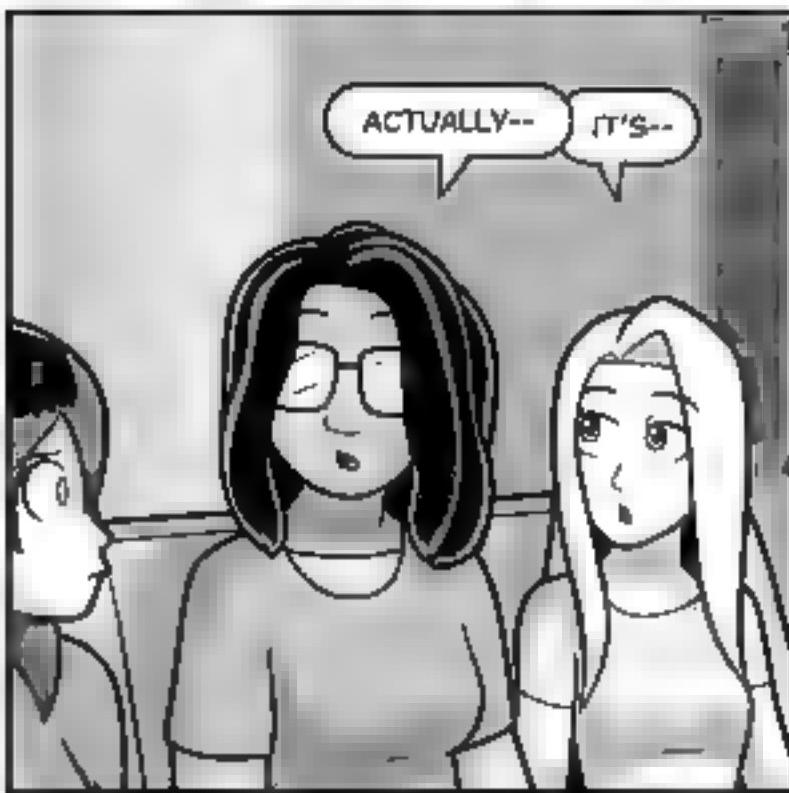
RIGHT!

A AND WE
HAVEN'T EVEN
KISSED YET

YES! LIKE EVEN IF YOU'RE
TRANSFORMED YOU'RE STILL
YOU AND I'M STILL ME







THIS IS THE
MOST IMPULSIVE I
HAVE EVER BEEN.

AND I ONCE
SET A GIANT
GOO MONSTER
ON FIRE.

I READ ABOUT THAT
YOU'RE, UM, OKAY WITH
STOPPING WHEN WE
DID, AREN'T YOU?

WE LITERALLY
BOTH SAID
"WE SHOULD
STOP" AT THE
SAME TIME

BECAUSE NEITHER
OF US ACTUALLY WANTED
TO STOP AND WE WOULD
HAVE JUST KEPT GOING

RIGHT WE DON'T
WANT TO MOVE
TOO QUICKLY

RIGHT THIS IS
OUR FIRST DATE AND
WE'RE IN A STORE

RIGHT

RIGHT

WE NEED TO
IMMEDIATELY LEAVE
THIS CHANGING
AREA.

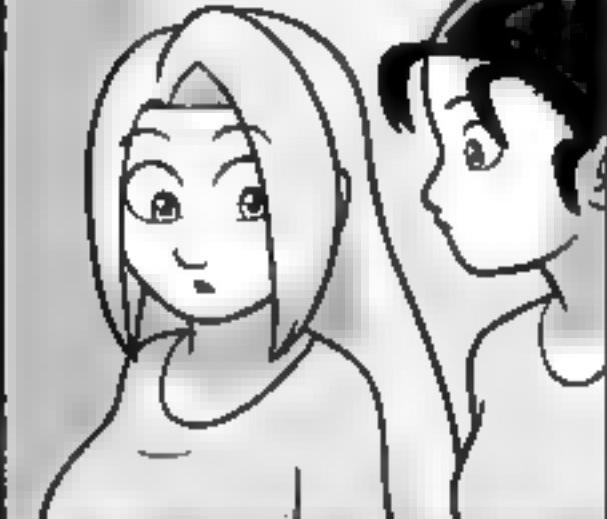
AGREED

SO, UM, WHAT
DO YOU WANT--
I MEAN WHAT
SHOULD WE
DO NOW?

MAYBE WE SHOULD GO
BACK TO THE BOOK STORE SO
YOU CAN CHANGE BACK?

HUH. THAT
PROBABLY IS WHAT
WE SHOULD--

BZZ
BZZ



MY PHONE'S
RINGING WELL,
BUZZING.

NOW'S PROBABLY
NOT THE BEST TIME
TO ANSWER IT

BZZ

YEAH BUT
I SHOULD AT
LEAST SEE WHO
TENSAIDED?

"TEN-
SIDED"?

I WORKED
FOR HIM OVER
THE SUMMER.
WHY WOULD HE



OH CRAP

BZZ!

Last
August

YOU STILL PLANNING
TO LET TENSAIDED MEET
CHEERLEADRA BEFORE
SCHOOL STARTS?

WHAT
ARE YOU--OH
CRAP



I KNOW HE'S YOUR FRIEND BUT I'M NOT GOING TO HIRE SOMEONE WHO HE KNOWS CHEERLEADERA.

HE... WHAT?

HE WON'T ADMIT IT TO JUST ANYONE BUT HE DOES HIS WORKING HERE IS THE BEST CHANCE YOU HAVE OF EVER MEETING HER.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO, YOU KNOW

NO, BUT IT'S WHY HE HIRED ME. I REALLY SHOULD.

SHOULD YOU? YOU'RE UNDER NO OBLIGATION TO DO IT AND AS UNLIKELY AS IT IS THAT HE'LL PUT TWO AND TWO TOGETHER, IT COULD STILL BACKFIRE IN SOME OTHER WAY.

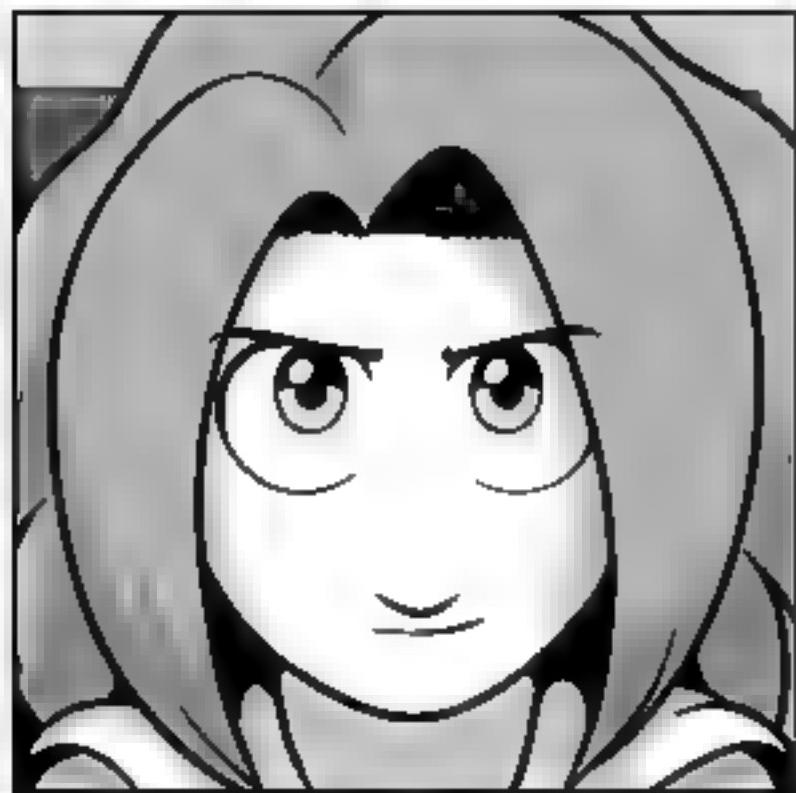
IT'LL BE FINE I JUST NEED A GOOD PLAN.

Shortly before closing time two nights later .

THIS IS THE WORST PLAN.







ARE YOU
CHEERLEADRA?

-BLINK-

WHO ELSE
WOULD I BE?

I DON'T
MEAN TO
OFFEND! IT'S
JUST

WELL, IF I'M GOING TO TELL
ELLIOT CHEERLEADRA STOPPED
BY I WANT TO BE SURE THAT
SHE ACTUALLY DID!

ALSO I'M A BIG
FAN BUT THAT'S
LESS IMPORTANT

I DON'T
WANT TO BE
A PAWN IN
SOME SORT
OF EVIL
VILLAIN
PLOT!

I CAN PROVE
IT TO YOU.





I GUESS I
COULD AUTOGRAPH
SOMETHING FOR
YOU

GREAT! THANK YOU!
I'VE GOT A VHS COPY
OF THE 1984 SUPERGIRL
MOVIE THAT'D BE
PERFECT FOR

WAIT BEFORE I
FORGET IS THERE
ANY WAY TO
CONTACT YOU?

WHY WOULD
YOU WANT TO
CONTACT ME?

NOT FOR
STALKER-JERK
REASONS! IT'S
JUST

WELL, LOOK AT THE PAST FEW
MONTHS AROUND HERE! THERE'S BEEN A
GOO MONSTER, AN EVIL MONKEY, A FIRE
PERSON, AND A BULLDOG DRAGON! YOU'D
HELP WITH STUFF LIKE THAT, RIGHT?

WELL, UH... YEAH, UH...
CALL ELLIOT? HE, UM,
CAN GET IN CONTACT
WITH ME NO PROBLEM.

BUT ONLY IF IT'S
AN EMERGENCY

DON'T WORRY! I MIGHT
TEXT HIM A MOVIE REVIEW
REQUEST OR FIVE AFTER
HE'S DONE WORKING HERE,
BUT THE ONLY REASON I'D
ACTUALLY CALL HIM WOULD
BE AN EMERGENCY!

Present Date

ONLY
REASON.

I'D BETTER
TAKE THIS.

ZAP!

ELLIOT'S
PHONE

WHO IS
THIS? IT'S
URGENT
THAT I
SPEAK
WITH
ELLIOT!

I'M A FRIEND. TRUST ME
ANYTHING YOU CAN TELL HIM,
YOU CAN TELL ME.

YOU MUST BE
THAT GIRL I SAW HIM
WITH. I WOULD'VE
SAID HELLO, BUT IT
LOOKED LIKE A
DATE AND...

THAT'S NOT
IMPORTANT RIGHT
NOW! THERE'S
SOME BIG CLOAKED...
THING IN THE
MIDDLE OF THE
MALL!

CLOAKED
THING?

I DON'T THINK
SHE'S HUMAN, OR
EVEN HUMANOID!
AND I THINK SHE'S
LOOKING FOR
ELLIOT. SHE (I
THINK SHE'S A
SHE) IS
DEMANDING TO
SEE "ELLIOT
GERMAN DARK"

"GERMAN
DARK"?

I LOOKED
IT UP ON MY
PHONE, AND
ONE WORD
FOR DARK IN
GERMAN IS
"DUNKEL"!

ELLIOT
PRONOUNCES
IT LIKE AN
ENGLISH WORD,
BUT STILL KINDA
THINKING THAT
BEING HIS LAST
NAME IS NOT A
COINCIDENCE!

HUH.
WELL, THAT
ANSWERS ONE
QUESTION.

WHAT?
LISTEN, YOU
AND ELLIOT NEED
TO GET OUT OF
HERE AND
ELLIOT NEEDS
TO CALL "YOU-
KNOW-WHO".
HE'LL KNOW
WHAT I MEAN.
OKAY?

YEAH.

OKAY GOOD I'LL BE IN THE
GAMING STORE IT'S NO SALTY
CRACKER COMICS BUT SHE'S
OUT THERE AND THEY'VE GOT
REPLICA SWORDS IN HERE

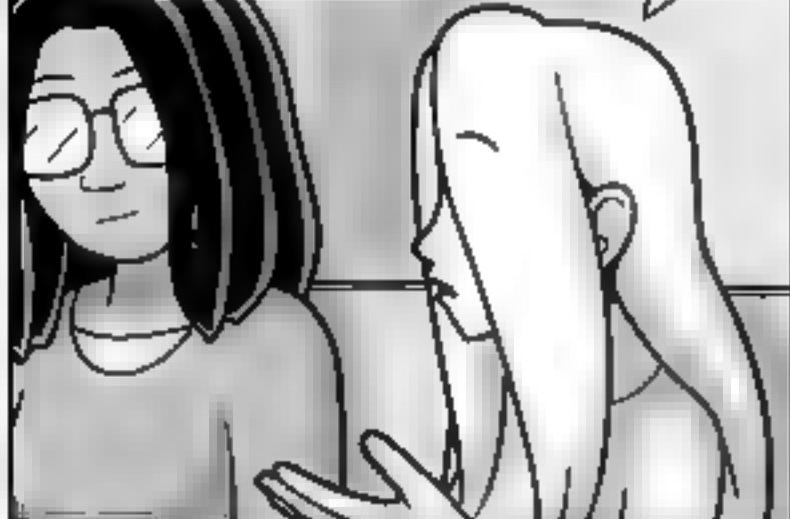
OKAY?

FOX IS OBVIOUSLY ABLE TO PLAY THE GAME.

SHE CLEARLY HAS FULL ACCESS TO YOUR MUSCLE MEMORY AND KNOWLEDGE OF THE GAME EVEN WITHOUT YOU EXERTING CONTROL OVER HER.

AT THE SAME TIME SHE'S LIKE... SOME SORT OF ROBOT OR SOME THING. SHE CAN MIMIC YOUR EMOTIONS AND BEHAVIOR AND STUFF...

BUT SHE'S NOT REALLY DEALING WITH THE SAME EMOTIONS AND THOUGHTS AS YOU



RIGHT SHE'S LIKE AN ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE WHO CAN DO EVERYTHING YOU CAN DO BUT WITH BETTER FOCUS

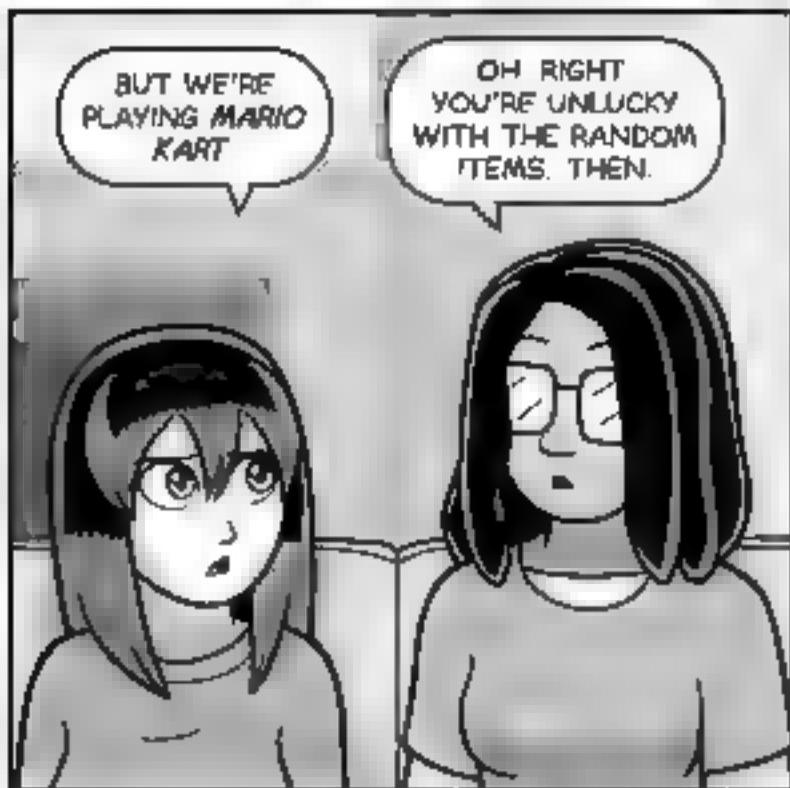
AND ON TOP OF THAT SHE'S RUNNING OFF YOUR SUBCONSCIOUS.

SHE PROBABLY KNOWS WHAT YOU'RE THINKING. MAYBE EVEN BEFORE YOU DO.



BUT WE'RE PLAYING MARIO KART

OH RIGHT YOU'RE UNLUCKY WITH THE RANDOM ITEMS, THEN.



SOMETHING'S GOING ON. I WANT YOU TO GET SOMEWHERE WITH A LOT OF COVER AWAY FROM THE MIDDLE OF THE MALL. OKAY?

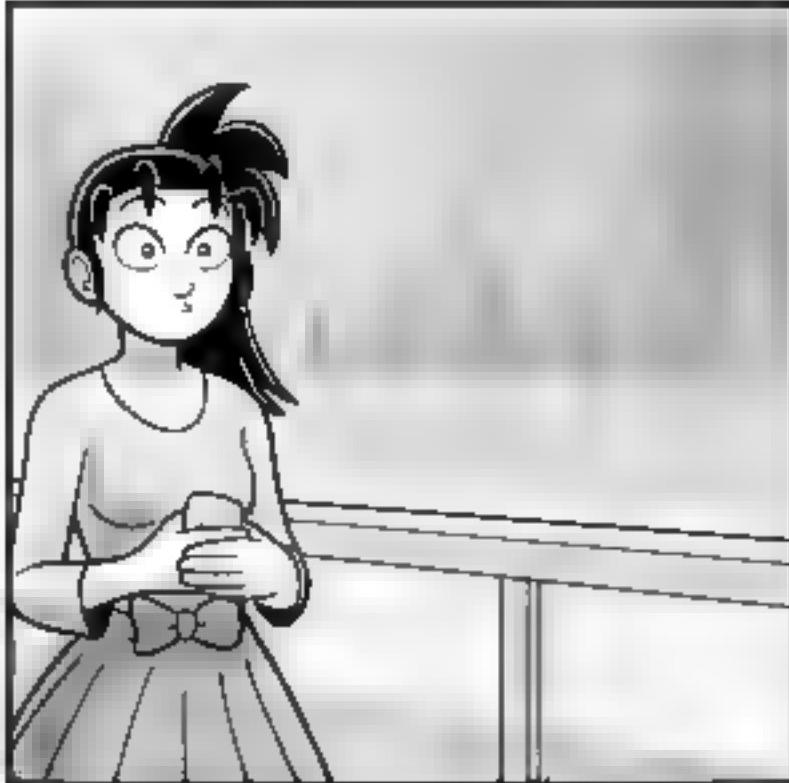
WHAT'S HAPPENING? AND SHOULDN'T WE BOTH GET SOMEWHERE SAFE?

JUST.. PLEASE GET SOMEWHERE SAFE, AND... AND TAKE MY PHONE CALL "ELLEN" IN MY LIST OF NUMBERS AND TELL HER CHEERLEADRA IS GOING TO TRY TO TALK TO THE CLOAKED FIGURE AT THE MALL. OKAY?

CHEERLEADRAP BUT.. WHERE ARE YOU GOING TO BE?

TRYING TO TALK TO THE CLOAKED FIGURE







**HEY,
YOU!**

YOU'RE, UM,
LOOKING FOR
SOMEONE?

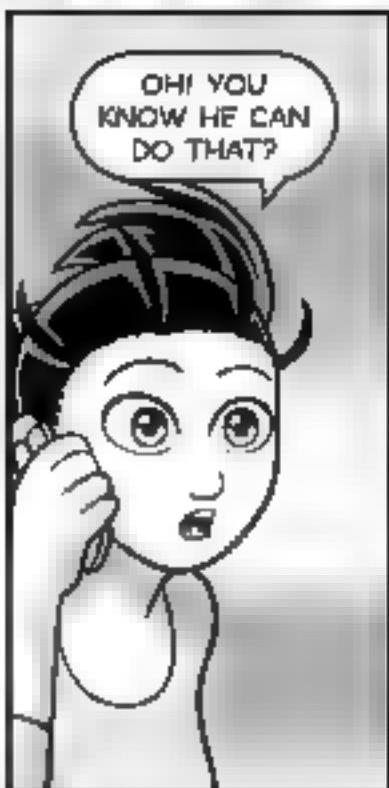
WOULD YOU
LIKE TO CALMLY
TALK ABOUT THAT?
AND STUFF?

A mage...

WHAT THE
HELL IS SHE?

AND HOW
DOES THAT
"CLOAK"
EVEN STAY
ON HER?

WHAT IS LOVE? BABY DON'T HURT M



A WHAT?
SORRY I DIDN'T
HEAR THAT

JH...



WHAT'S HAPPENING?

TIGER GRIFFIN?

WHAT?

THE CLOAKED
FIGURE IS A TALKING
TIGER GRIFFIN!

SHE WANTS TO KNOW
WHERE HER WIFE IS AND
SORT OF SOUNDS LIKE RAVEN
FROM TEEN TITANS.

NOT EXACTLY LIKE RAVEN'S
VOICE, BUT IT'S ALL I CAN
THINK TO COMPARE IT TO.

I
DON'T...

PEOPLE SAW
A GRIFFIN AT
MOPERVILLE NORTH
A COUPLE MONTHS
AGO. WAS SHE--

Don't play the fool
with ME, German Dark! I have
the word of an Ancient saying
you know where she is!

I'M... I'M
NOT REALLY
SURE WHAT THAT
MEANS, BUT
I'M NOT

You recognized
the code phrase, and
I SEE THROUGH
the magic on you.

That
enchantment is
NOT your
true form!

Take me to
my wife...

...AND I WON'T
KILL YOU AFTER
DISPELLING IT.

EVEN IF YOU
WERE RIGHT ABOUT
WHO I AM, AND I'M
NOT SAYING YOU
ARE, I HAVE NO IDEA
WHERE SHE IS!

I KNOW YOU
HAVE THE
WORD OF SOME
"ANCIENT"
PERSON, BUT I
REALLY DON'T!

SHE WAS JUST... THERE ONE DAY! ELLIOT
ASKED HER WHY SHE WAS THERE, AND
SHE SAID 'I AM IN SEARCH OF AVALON'!

ELLIOT DIDN'T KNOW WHERE
IT WAS, AND SAID SOMETHING
THAT WAS PROBABLY STUPID IN
RETROSPECT, AND SHE LEFT!

Ancients are
INCREDIBLY
knowledgeable
and wise.

THEN THEY'RE LYING!

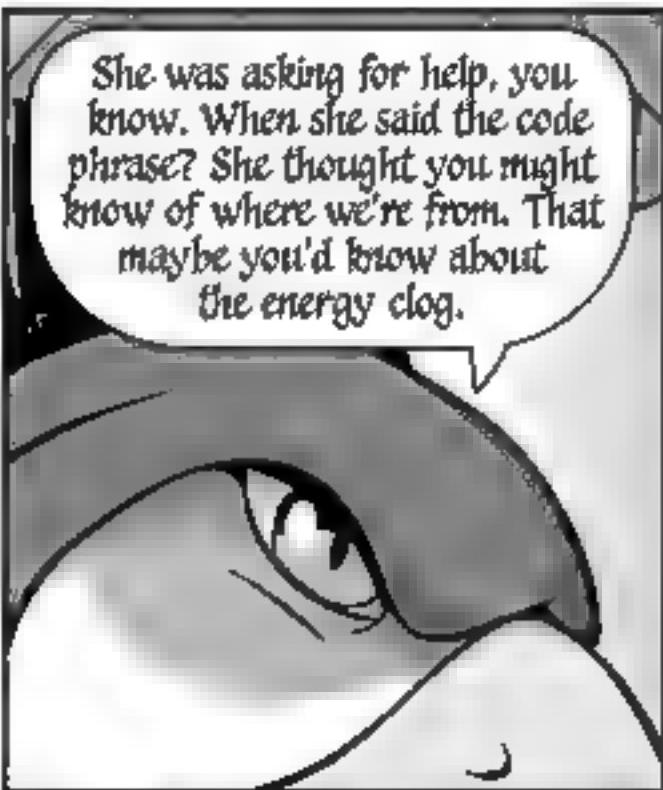
ANCESTS
CANNOT
LIE!

THAT ANCIENT
IS WRONG!

It's THE RULES! It's THEIR
rules! They KNOW when
they are broken, and to break
them is to DECLARE WAR on
the rest of their kind!

THAT... DOESN'T
SOUND LIKE THEY CAN'T
BE EXACTLY IT SOUNDS
MORE LIKE IT'S JUST A
BAD IDEA TO...

JUST TAKE
ME TO MY WIFE
ALREADY!





FANTASTIC.
MOVE, PLEASE!

THAT GRIFFIN IS A KNIGHT
FROM ANOTHER WORLD. IT
MIGHT TAKE HER SEVERAL
ATTEMPTS TO HIT ELLIOT, BUT
SHE ONLY NEEDS ONE HIT

IMAGINE WHAT
SHORT WORK SHE
WOULD MAKE OF
SOMEONE AS
FRAGILE AS YOU.

I... I DON'T
KNOW WHAT
YOUR DEAL
IS...

BUT I'M
STOPPING THE
FIGHT! SHE
WON'T HURT
ME!

WON'T
SHE?

GET
OUT OF MY
WAY!

I'M NOT ACTUALLY IN
YOUR WAY. YOU COULD WALK
RIGHT THROUGH ME

I WAS JUST

GIVING SOME ADVICE



SO MUCH OF MARTIAL ARTS IS ABOUT BALANCE AND SHIFTING YOUR WEIGHT! HOW DOES THAT EVEN WORK WHEN DEFYING GRAVITY?!



I COULD LAND AND TRY TO FIGHT THAT WAY BUT I DON'T KNOW HOW TO FIGHT A FOUR LEGGED TIGER-BIRD, EITHER!



I HATE TO ADMIT IT BUT MY BEST STRATEGY IS TO BUY TIME AND WAIT FOR THE CAVALRY!



I'VE GOTTA GET THEIR ATTENTION, BUT IF I DISTRACT ELLIOT AT THE WRONG MOMENT...



HOW CAN I STOP THEM WITHOUT...



WAIT! ISN'T THERE A



YES/
THAT'S
IT!







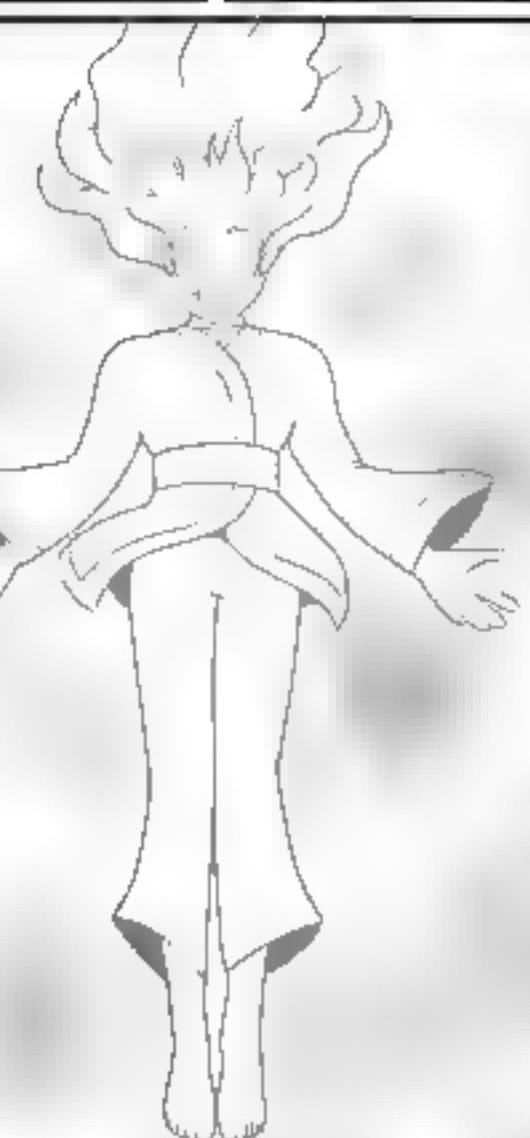




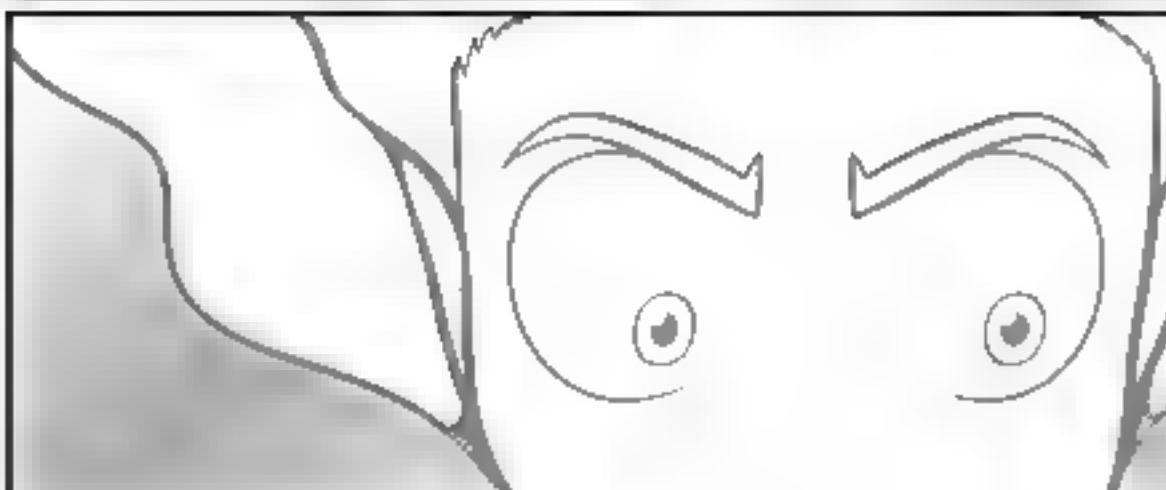
DO
NOT BE
DECEIVED,
DAME
TARA



THIS GIRL,
ASHLEY, IS THE
POTENTIAL MATE
OF GERMAN DARK
I SPOKE OF IN
MY RIDDLE



THEY ARE
ALLIES, AND
MORE



HER WORD
CANNOT BE
TRUSTED.



The ENTIRE REASON I've been chasing German Dark around is because I want her to tell me where my wife is. Now her friend says she might be able to help, and you want me to IGNORE that?

I'M NOT TELLING YOU WHAT TO DO I AM SIMPLY ADVISING YOU

SEE? THAT'S WHAT IMMORTALS ON OUR WORLD DO! THEY GUIDE! THAT'S WHAT THEY AGREED ON!

Ancients do that, too, except they're big on riddles.

Okay, I don't know how you turn "they're liars" into a riddle, but shouldn't YOU?

Shouldn't you be phrasing this advice like... um...

YOU ALREADY SOLVED MY RIDDLES MY CONTINUED GUIDANCE IS YOUR REWARD FOR--

I CAN'T TAKE THIS ANYMORE!

**IMMORTALS
CAN LIE!**

I'M FIVE
HUNDRED FEET
TALL!

CATS ARE
JUST SMALL
DOGS!

ALL CAKES
ARE PIES!

PEOPLE ONLY
USE TEN PERCENT
OF THEIR BRAIN!

THE MOON
LANDING WAS
A HOAX!

THE LOCH
NESS MONSTER
IS BIG FOOT!

MEN BUY ADULT
MAGAZINES FOR
THE ARTICLES!

IS THERE
AN IMMORTAL
CONVENTION AT
THIS MALL?

I... don't know what
most of those assertions
even MEAN...

...But everything after
"immortals can lie" was
superfluous, wasn't it?

YOU DARE
TO INTERFERE
W.TH--

CRAM IT, YOU! YOU'RE THE
ONE PUSHING "ONLY GUIDE AND
EMPOWER" AS FAR AS IT'LL BEND!

DAMMIT I LEFT OUT
THE "EMPOWER" BIT
INTENTIONALLY...



HELENA!
WHAT ARE YOU
DOING?!

YOU CRAM IT TOO,
DEMETRIUS! I'M TIRED
OF JUST SITTING BACK AND
LETTING STUFF HAPPEN!

THE GRIFFIN WAS
ALREADY DOUBTING THAT
GUY! THIS WOULD'VE
RESOLVED WITHOUT YOU!

YEAH, IT
WOULD'VE
SLOWLY



German Dark. I deeply apologize for attacking you. I was upset and misled, but that is no excuse. A knight must do better.



As for YOU...
BEGONE.



I AM
IMMORTAL
GRIFFIN.

YOU DO
NOT TELL
ME WHAT
TO.



BE



GONE!

HOLY CRAP
SHE WAS HOLDING
BACK WHEN SHE
ATTACKED ME

SHE WAS HOLDING
BACK A LOT

YOU ARE NO THREAT
TO ME. THOUGH THAT IS,
IN PART, BECAUSE I CAN
DEPART TO ANOTHER LAYER
OF REALITY I CONCEDER
THE POINT

I SHALL BEGONE.
FARE THEE WELL...

ELLIOT
DUNKEL

SO WE
ESTABLISHED
THAT HE'S A
L.I.A.R. RIGHT?

WHO'S ELLIOT DUNKEL?

WASN'T THE BIRD YELLING FOR ELLIOT GERMAN DARK?

THAT MUST BE HER SECRET IDENTITY!

ELLIOT CAN BE A GIRL'S NAME?

WHO CARES? DUDE WAS A LYING LAR!



WHY DOES THAT NAME SOUND FAMILIAR?

ISN'T THAT THE WEIRD MARTIAL ARTS GUY FROM SCHOOL?

THAT'S WHAT THAT GUY'S NAME IS?

HOLY JACKASS THAT GIRL IS WHO I THOUGHT SHE WAS



BETWEEN THIS AND THAT GIRL BEING THE ONE I SAW HIM WITH EARLIER. COULD CHEERLEADERA REALLY BE ELLIOT?!



WE SHOULD PROBABLY GO NOW...



TARA'S ABOUT
TO MAKE NOISE
BE COOL

WHAT?







A moment earlier



HEY!

GAH!

GRAB ASHLEY AND FLY OUT THROUGH THE NORTH EXIT YOU SHOULD HAVE TIME TO CHANGE BACK TO NORMAL WITHOUT BEING SEEN THEN

STAY HIDDEN BUT FOLLOW GERMAN DARK AND HER VEHICLE THERE IS A PARKING LOT NORTHWEST OF HERE DEAL FOR REGROUPING AND

O.M.G.
Fairy

SHE WANTS ME TO FLY OUT OF HERE AND CARRY YOU WITH ME

OKAY
LET'S
GO?

YOU DON'T
HAVE TO COME
WITH ME

BUT I
WANT TO COME
WITH YOU

BESIDES IT'S WAY TOO LATE TO SAY I'M NOT INVOLVED TARA EXPECTS ME TO HELP FIND HER WIFE AND YOU'RE SORTA MY RIDE

I DO
WANT TO
THOUGH

ELLIOT?!

HEY ELLEN.
WE'RE OKAY.
ASHLEY AND I
ARE IN THE--

YOU
JERKS!

SAY
WHAT
NOW?

NEITHER ONE
OF YOU COULD WE
ANSWERED THE
DAMN PHONE?!

WE WERE SORTA
BUSY TALKING DOWN
AN AGGRESSIVE
TIGER GRIFFIN.

WE THOUGHT
YOU MIGHT BE
DEAD!

WHAT?
WHY WOULD
YOU THINK
THAT?!

I MEAN, OTHER
THAN MY PROXIMITY
TO A TIGER GRIFFIN.

BECAUSE NANASE
TRIED CONTACTING YOU WITH
HER FAIRY SPELL, AND IT KEPT
NOT WORKING!

BUT NANASE'S
BEEN TO THIS
MALL. WHY
WOULDN'T IT?!

EXACTLY

OOOOH.

UH, SORRY
ABOUT THAT..

BRRR! MY COAT'S ALL COLD! I GUESS THAT SHOULDN'T SURPRISE ME.

I'LL GET THE HEATER GOING.

SO WE'RE GOING TO MEET UP WITH TARA THE GRIFFIN NOW RIGHT?

I GUESS SO. THAT IMMORTAL SAID WE SHOULD MEET UP AT AN EMPTY PARKING LOT. I THINK I KNOW WHERE IT IS.

"THINK"?

I'VE GOT A FUNNY FEELING THAT IF I DO MAKE A WRONG TURN, SOMEONE'S GONNA SHOW UP TO CORRECT ME.

DO YOU KNOW THEM? THE... HELPFUL IMMORTALS?

NEVER SEEN THEM BEFORE. I'VE HEARD ABOUT IMMORTALS, BUT I'D NEVER MET ONE.

OH, UH... IS IT A BAD IDEA TO TRUST THEM?

IMMORTALS IN GENERAL? I DON'T KNOW, BUT I THINK THOSE TWO ARE ACTUALLY TRYING TO HELP US.

IT DID SEEM THAT WAY... SHOULD I CALL ELLEN AGAIN? YOU'VE GOT TWELVE MISSED CALLS FROM HER.

EEP.

ANYWAY AH. WE ARE
OKAY BUT WE SORTA
HAVE TO GO AND MEET
THE TIGER GRIFFIN TARA
IN SOME FARTHER LST.

"TARA"? YOU
GUYS MADE
FR ENDS?

I GUESS? SHE
APOLOGIZED TO ME BUT
SHE'S ALSO EXPECTING
US TO HAVE A GENERAL
IDEA WHERE HER WIFE IS.
DO YOU GUYS REALLY
KNOW WHERE SHE IS?

WE HAVE A
GOOD IDEA WHERE
TO LOOK WHERE DO
WE MEET YOU?

YOU DON'T HAVE
TO MEET US! YOU
COULD JUST TELL
US WHAT TO—

IS TARA GOING TO
ACCEPT THAT YOUR
FRIENDS JUST
HAPPEN TO HAVE
THIS INFORMATION?

...MAYBE?

AND MAYBE IT'LL LOOK
SUPER SUSPICIOUS IF
YOU CAN'T EXPLAIN
HOW AND WHY WE
KNOW ALL THIS.

BUT SHE
ISN'T EXPECTING
ANYBODY ELSE
TO BE THERE!

WE'LL
KEEP OUR
DISTANCE
UNTIL YOU
WAVE JS
IN.

BESIDES, IF
SHE'S ON
THAT BAD OF A
HAIR TRIGGER,
THEN YOU
NEED BACKUP

OKAY, OKAY. YOU KNOW THOSE
PLAIN LOOKING BUILDING DEALIES THAT
ARE SORT OF IN THE MALL AREA, BUT
NOT, AND COULD BE OFFICE SPACE OR
WAREHOUSES OR WHATEVER?

YEAH.

ONCE ELLIOT GIVES THE
OKAY, NANASE AND I WILL JOIN
THEM AND EXPLAIN THE HOWS
AND WHYS WE KNOW STUFF

YOU WANT
JS TO WAIT IN
THE CAR?



I'M NOT ASSUMING THAT THE
FREAKIN' TIGER GRIFFIN WON'T
FLIP OUT IF IT TURNS OUT WE'RE
WRONG OR SOMETHING. IF JUST
ME AND NANASE GO THEN THE
ONLY BYSTANDER WE HAVE TO
WORRY ABOUT IS ASHLEY

WHAT IS IT
ABOUT "BYSTANDER"
THAT SOUNDS SO
CONDESCENDING?

I HAVE A
GUARDIAN ANGEL
FORM. WHAT'S
YOUR MOVE IF THE
TIGER GRIFFIN
FLIPS OUT?

GET
BEHIND YOU,
OBVIOUSLY



ACCORDING TO SOCIAL MEDIA, THE GRIFFIN IS
A KNIGHT WHO ONLY ATTACKED CHEERLEADRA
BECAUSE SOMEONE WHO PRESUMABLY COULDN'T
JE SAID CHEERLEADRA HAD DONE SOMETHING TO
HER WIFE AND SHE CEASED HOSTILITIES AFTER
GETTING HIT WITH A SOCCER BALL.



DIANE, DO
YOU HAVE A
SOCCER-

NO.

THERE IS ALSO EVIDENCE TO SUGGEST THAT CHEERLEADRA IS ELLEN'S BROTHER.

WHAT?!

ROAD! ROAD!

SCREECH



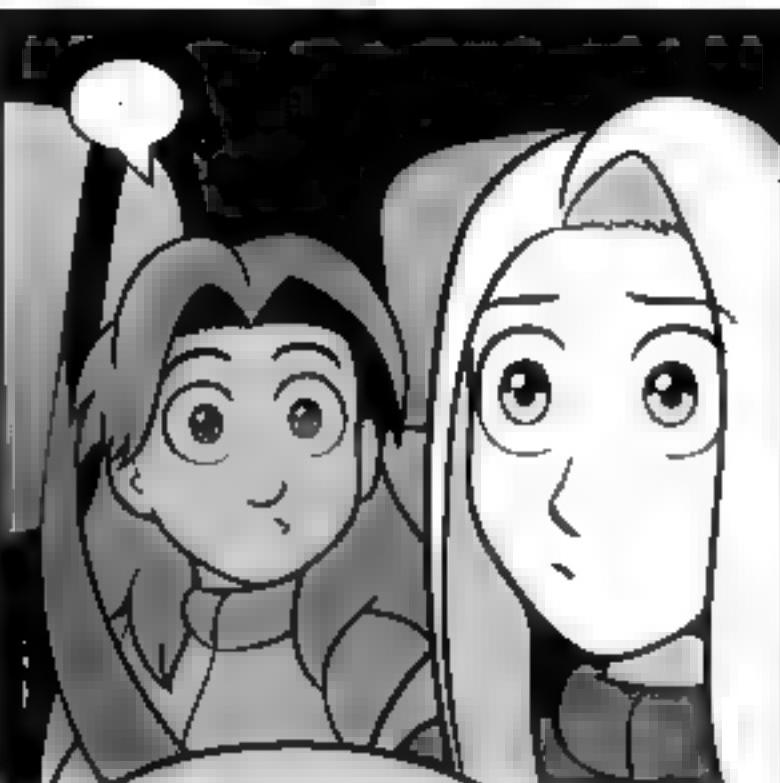
CHARLOTTE! WHY WOULD YOU SAY THAT?!

I'M NOT VOCALIZING DEDUCTION. PEOPLE ARE CLAIMING A FLOATING ELF JESUS CALLED HER "ELLIOT DUNKEL"

WHAT



BUT HOW WOULD THAT EVEN. YOU WERE ON THE PHONE WITH ELLIOT WHEN CHEERLEADRA WAS TALKING TO THE GRIFFIN. RIGHT?



YES. THAT IS WHAT HAPPENED.



ARE YOU SURE
THIS IS THE RIGHT
PLACE?

"TIS.

EEP!

I MEAN
HELLO

HI. UH..
I'M ELLIOT

I can tell, but
I appreciate you
saying so.

I was starting to
worry, but the "fairy"
immortal reminded me
that your vehicle could
not travel here as quickly
as I could fly.

You arranged
for the friends you
spoke of to meet
us here?

UH.
YEAH. HOW
DID YOU--

Again, the fairy immortal.
That, and I saw them turning into
the parking lot just next to this
one a moment ago.

REALLY? HUH. I
TOLD THEM WHERE
TO GO.

YOU'RE OUTSIDE OF THE CAR. THAT IS THE OPPOSITE OF STAYING IN THE CAR.

YOU'RE READY TO THROW DOWN WITH A TIGER GRIFFIN?

I AM READY TO DO WHAT I AM BEST AT

I CANNOT HELP IF I REMAIN IN THE CAR

THANK YOU. THAT TOTALLY CLEARS THINGS UP

WHAT'S YOUR EXCUSE?

GIRL, I DO WHAT I WANT

YEAH, THAT'S THEM.

YES, MY FRIENDS. I KNOW THEM WELL.

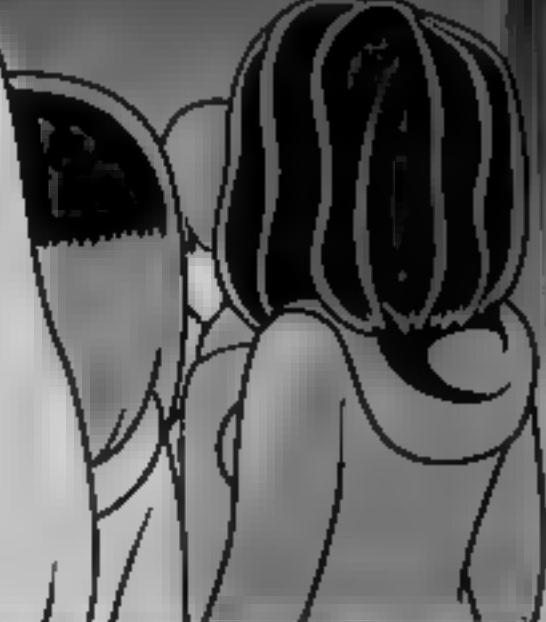
The fairy immortal ALSO let me know that it is ELLIOT who--

HEY GUYS. UH,
THIS IS ASHLEY...

...AND TARA.

HI!

Greetings.



'SUP? I'M
ELLEN AND THIS
IS CHARLOTTE .

GREETINGS.

NANASE

HELLO

AND
DIANE

UH...
YEAH. HI AND
STUFF



It's... Forgive me,
but... JUST Nanase?
No title?

A TITLE? LIKE
WHAT? WHY WOULD
I HAVE A TITLE?

From your
aura, I was expecting
"princess".



You have inside you
blood of queens.

This is based on what I was taught in my world, so perhaps it's different here, but your aura simply RADIATES royalty.



HOW DOES THAT EVEN.. EVEN WITH "BECAUSE MAGIC". THAT'S A STRETCH. YOU JUST LOOK AT PEOPLE AND KNOW STUFF LIKE THAT ABOUT THEM?



...that you're Elliot's twin in spite of having an oddly... DIFFERENT sort of magic potential...



...and that YOU'RE a potential VAMPIRE HUNTER

VAMPIRES ARE REAL?!

(I MEAN I
KNOW I'M ASKING A
GRIFFIN BUT)

NOT LIKE
IN BOOKS, BUT
YEAH

I HELPED
KILL ONE

...Are you
CERTAIN you're
not royalty?

WAIT WAIT WAIT—
HOW EXACTLY AM I POTENTIAL
FREAKIN' VAMPIRE HUNTER!?

I can explain it
to you, but FIRST
there is the matter of
my MISSING WIFE.

I understand you have
a general idea of where
she might be?

YES. WE THINK
SO. IT'S JUST A
THEORY BUT WE
THINK SHE'S

Forgive me. I
don't believe you have ill
intent, but I have already
been fooled once.

I would like to know
HOW you know, and
WHY you were looking
for her to begin with.

HOW AND WHY OKAY! I HAD A FEELING YOU'D WANT TO KNOW

BASICALLY WE WERE BORED. AND--

IF I MAY

I TAKE INTEREST IN THE UNUSUAL AND SPOOKY AND A COUPLE OF MONTHS AGO, PEOPLE STARTED REPORTING SIGHTINGS OF A CLOAKED FIGURE AROUND MOPERVILLE AND ITS NEIGHBORING AREAS.

MY CURIOSITY WAS VERY RECENTLY PIQUED WHEN SOMEONE MANAGED TO GET AN IMAGE OF THE FIGURE SHOWING THAT THEY CLEARLY WEREN'T HUMAN.

THIS MADE ME WANT TO SOLVE THE MYSTERY THUS ANSWERING WHY

AS FOR HOW, ELLEN NOTICED A DISPARITY IN BEHAVIOR DURING THESE SIGHTINGS THAT IMPLIED TWO CLOAKED FIGURES.

THE MORE STEALTHY ONE WHO ASKED NAMES, WHOM WE NOW ASSUME TO HAVE BEEN YOU, DIDN'T HAVE A CLEAR PATTERN TO WHERE THEY'D BEEN.

I HAVE been many places looking, but...

The OTHER cloaked figure. SHE had a pattern?

SHE HAS ONLY BEEN SPOTTED IN MOPERVILLE

THAT'S STILL A COUPLE DOZEN SQUARE MILES. BUT WE BELIEVE WE KNOW THE GENERAL AREA SHE'D MOST LIKELY BE FOUND IN GIVEN HER SURVIVAL



I ASSUME SHE CANNOT SIMPLY RETURN TO YOUR WORLD FROM JUST ANYWHERE?

There are specific places to do it. The only obstacle should be getting to one of them.

MAYBE SHE CAN'T GET TO ONE FOR SOME REASON?

I've been to the one she used to get here many times these past couple months. It is easily accessible.

SHE'S SHOWN TOO MUCH MOBILITY FOR AN INJURY TO

MAYBE THERE'S AN ENEMY SHE DOESN'T WANT TO LEAD THERE?

WHAT IF SHE'S BEING LIED TO BY SOMEONE TOO?

MAYBE SHE HAS A BAD SENSE OF DIRECTION?

OKAY YEAH, THAT'S PROBABLY NOT IT...

THAT...

Sounds exactly like Andrea.

WHAT.

And that's the how...
if you're correct, if
you've found her, I'm
grateful, but...

BUT?

You make it sound as
though no one has been
holding her captive.
As though she were free
to come and go as
she pleased.

AND THAT'S.. BAD?

I BELIEVED that
TREACHEROUS ANCIENT
when he told me someone
had taken my wife for
reasons BEYOND thinking
he couldn't lie.

If she hasn't been
taken, then there's no
REASON for her to
stay in this world.

YOU SAID SHE WAS
HERE ABOUT SOME
SORT OF ENERGY
CLOG, RIGHT?

MAYBE
SHE'S STILL
TRYING TO
UNCLOG IT?

Regardless of whether she
found something, she should have
returned within a week.

Andrea's
relatively strong in
this world, but she's
not a warrior. she
would NOT willingly
remain here alone
for this long.

YOUR WIFE ISN'T A FIGHTER AND HAS A TERRIBLE SENSE OF DIRECTION. AND YOU LET HER GO TO ANOTHER WORLD BY HERSELF?

First of all, I didn't "let" her do anything. She's not my property. She does what she wants.

Secondly, she's brilliant and nowhere near helpless. She could easily defeat a hippo in combat.

A HIPPO?

WHY A HIPPO?

A hippo.

If Andrea IS simply having trouble finding her way back, then she would have made camp close to a TALL LANDMARK.

Something she could easily find again even with her sense of direction.

THERE'S A VERY TALL BELL TOWER WITHIN OUR ESTIMATED SEARCH PARAMETERS!

IT'S EVEN CLOSE TO A RIVER AND WOODLAND!

I GUESS WE SHOULD FLY OVER THERE AND CHECK IT OUT, THEN.

I would greatly appreciate it if you'd guide me to the belltower, but I can search for myself from there. You've all already helped me more than I deserve.

YOU WERE UPSET AND BEING LIED TO BY A MAGICAL DUDE WHO YOU THOUGHT COULDN'T LIE. BESIDES I DON'T WANT TO JUST LEAVE NOW AND NOT KNOW IF YOU EVER FOUND YOUR WIFE FOREVER. THAT WOULD BUG ME

Then I am grateful for your assistance.



ASHLEY I'M SORRY TO CUT OUR DATE SHORT, BUT...

WHY DOES IT HAVE TO BE OVER?

BE... BECAUSE FLYING AND GRIFFINS AND STUFF

YOU GUYS ARE SEEING THIS THROUGH, RIGHT?



WELL, YEAH.

YES.

DEFINITELY

I DROVE US HERE AND I KNOW WHERE THE BELL-TOWER IS. TRY AND DITCH ME

SORRY BUT YOUR GOODNIGHT KISS IS GOING TO HAVE TO WAIT





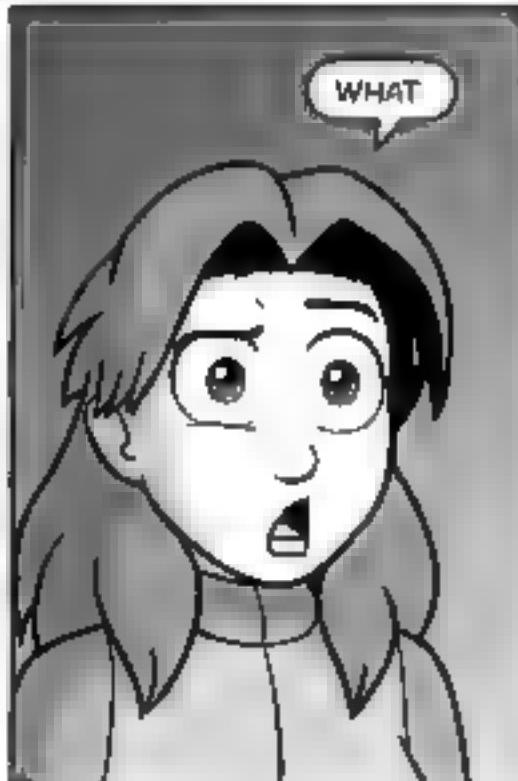
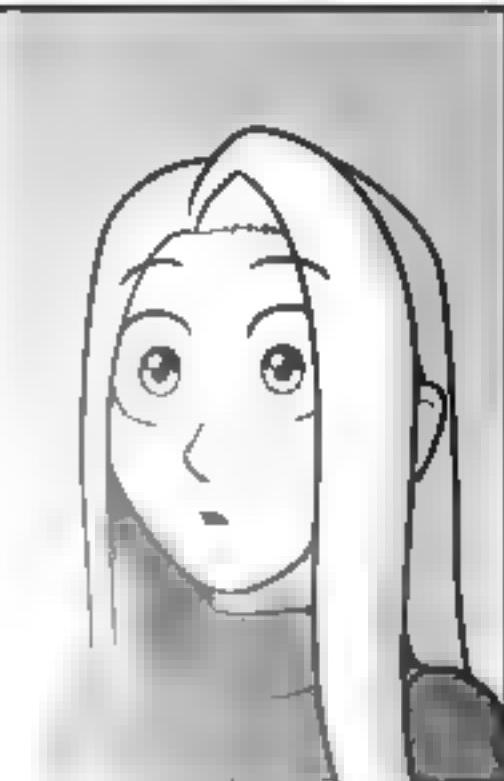
RIGHT
WELL... UH...

THIS IS SO WEIRD.
I BARELY KNOW
DIANA? AND...

OH MY GOD. I CAN'T EVEN REMEMBER
HER NAME, AND I'M ABOUT TO TURN
INTO CHEERLEADERA IN FRONT OF HER?!

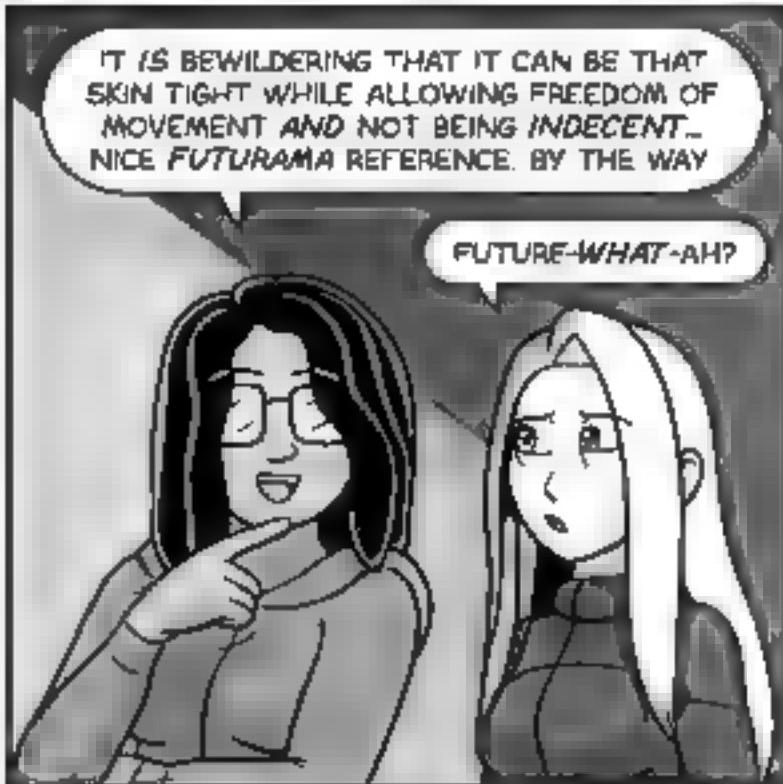


THEY PROBABLY THINK I PICKED
THAT NAME, TOO AND THE
OUTFIT! WHY DIDN'T MY SUB-
CONSCIOUS, OR MAGIC, OR
WHATEVER GIVE ME SOME-
THING COOL LIKE THOSE
URVUOM SUITS?





UM... I... WAS THINKING
ABOUT HOW I WISHED
CHEERLEADRA LOOKED
COOLER, AND I GUESS I
WOUND UP WITH... THIS?



HMPH. WELL, AS FASCINATING AS THAT FORM IS, YOU SHOULD RESET AND TRY AGAIN.

WHAT?

WHY?

PEOPLE WILL BE DEBATING IF YOU'RE CHEERLEADERA THE LINCHPIN WILL BE WHETHER YOU CAN TRANSFORM.

SO IF SOMEONE SEES SOME NEW SUPER HERO FLYING AROUND WITH A GRIFFIN TONIGHT IT'LL ACTUALLY SUPPORT THAT

CORRECT HOW NERDY OF YOU TO GET THAT SO QUICKLY.

I'M SMART! THAT DOESN'T MAKE ME A NERD WHO LIKES NERD THINGS.

CAN I GET PICTURES FIRST?

UH... SURE!

IS THAT REALLY A GOOD.

OKAY SURE HAVE FUN.

YOU'VE GOTTEN QUIET

JUST THINK N' BOUT BASEBALL

SO NOT ONLY DOES ELLIOT TURN INTO A GIRL, BUT HIS NEW GIRLFRIEND IS INTO IT?

AM I INTO IT? SHOULD IT BOTHER ME? IT'S WEIRD, BUT SUPER POWERS ARE COOL, AND WHO KNOWS HOW MUCH SAY HE HAD IN WHAT POWERS HE GOT

REALLY WHAT'S WORRYING IS THAT HE THINKS THAT COSTUME LOOKS COOL

OKAY THAT'S ENOUGH PICTURES. WE'RE KEEPING TARA WAITING.

It is fine. I have no right to demand haste after my earlier behavior.

SOMMICH'S
SOMMICH'S
SOMMICH'S
SOMMICH'S

THAT'S ENOUGH PICTURES.

DEFINITELY ENOUGH PICTURES.

SOMMICH'S
SOMMICH'S
SOMMICH'S
SOMMICH'S

And so, after changing back, and then to Cheerleadera Classic.

OKAY! WELL! THAT WAS GREAT! WE'LL MEET YOU BY THE BELL TOWER!

YOU'RE CERTAINLY IN A HURRY TO GO.

IT'S COLD OUT HERE

LET'S GO. WE SHOULD TRY TO GET THERE AT THE SAME TIME

You needn't worry about Andrea attacking them.

I'M NOT WORRIED ABOUT THAT. IT'S JUST

Is there someone ELSE who might attack them?

NOT THAT I KNOW OF BUT I CAN'T LET ANYTHING HAPPEN TO SUSAN'S SISTER!

SUSAN'S WHAT?

Who is "Susan"?

WHOOPS.

WOW I WOULD'VE BET THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS THAT I'D BE THE ONE WHO'D ACCIDENTALLY SPILL THOSE BEANS.

IT'S NOT IMPORTANT RIGHT NOW! AND A LONG STORY! AND TARA REALLY WANTS TO FIND HER WIFE!



FINE. BUT I'M GOING TO HAVE QUESTIONS LATER.

I'M CURIOUS, TOO BUT YOU SHOULDN'T FEEL OBLIGATED TO TELL ME ANYTHING.



DAMMIT! I CAN'T BELIEVE I DID THAT! I SHOULDN'T EVEN BE WORRIED ABOUT DIANE! THE GRIFFIN ISN'T GOING TO ATTACK HER...



...AND IT'S NOT LIKE THERE'S SOMETHING ELSE OUT THERE!

GONG

GONG

GONG





ALRIGHT,
LET'S GET
GOING. WE CAN
PROBABLY
CATCH UP
WITH THEM.



WE SHOULD
PROBABLY FOLLOW
THEM FOR SOME
OF THE WAY.

You doubt
your own
navigational
skills while
flying?



AT NIGHT? SURE.
I COULD PROBABLY GET US
THERE, AND WE'LL SEE IT
SOON ENOUGH, BUT...



...But there's a
vehicle we can
follow, so we may
as well.



Should we find Andrea, and...
assuming she is WELL, I will ask
her to explain to you the
connection between our worlds,
and why she came here.



CONNECTION? I DIDN'T
THINK WHAT HAPPENED IN
ONE UNIVERSE MATTERED
IN OTHER ONES.



AT LEAST,
NOT WITHOUT
PEOPLE JUMPING
BETWEEN THEM
AND DOING
STUFF.

I can't explain it
well, but... I'm not from a
SEPARATE universe.

I'm from the
first half of
THIS one.

SO, UH... ASHLEY.
YOU'VE PROBABLY GOT A
LOT OF QUESTIONS.

SO MANY
QUESTIONS.

I'M NOT GOING TO PAY. WE'VE
ONLY JUST MET, AND I TRUST
YOU'LL VOLUNTEER ANYTHING I
MIGHT NEED TO KNOW.

ARE YOU...
GOING TO ASK
ANY?

NO.

NOP

OH.
OKAY.

SERIOUSLY.
NOT ONE
QUESTION?

HOW DID YOU...

YOU WERE CONFIDENT
YOU COULD TELL I HAD
A MARK, BUT ADMITTED
YOU COULD BE WRONG
WHEN THERE WASN'T
ONE ON MY BACK.

THAT SUGGESTS YOU
HAD REASON TO THINK
YOU COULD SENSE
MARKS, AND THAT IT
WASN'T JUST BASED
ON YOUR ABILITY, IT
WAS A CONCLUSION
YOU REACHED BASED
ON EVIDENCE.

YOU'RE A SMART GUY,
SO THAT MEANS AT
LEAST TWO CONFIRMED
CASES OF PEOPLE WITH
MARKS BEFORE REACHING
THAT CONCLUSION.

YOU'RE ALSO NOT ASSUMING
EVERYONE WITH MAGIC HAVE MARKS,
SO YOU MUST HAVE SOMEHOW FOUND
OUT THAT SOMEONE ELSE WITH
MAGIC DOESN'T HAVE A MARK.

YOU'RE...
PRETTY DAMN
SMART.

HEH. I CAN
BE. SOME-
TIMES...

LOOK, I'M NOT ASKING YOU TO
NAME NAMES, BUT I WANTED
YOU TO KNOW THAT I KNOW.
AND I HOPE YOU'RE NOT
FEIGNING IGNORANCE, BECAUSE
I REALLY DO LIKE YOU.

WHICH IS BOTH SEXY
AND TERRIFYING.

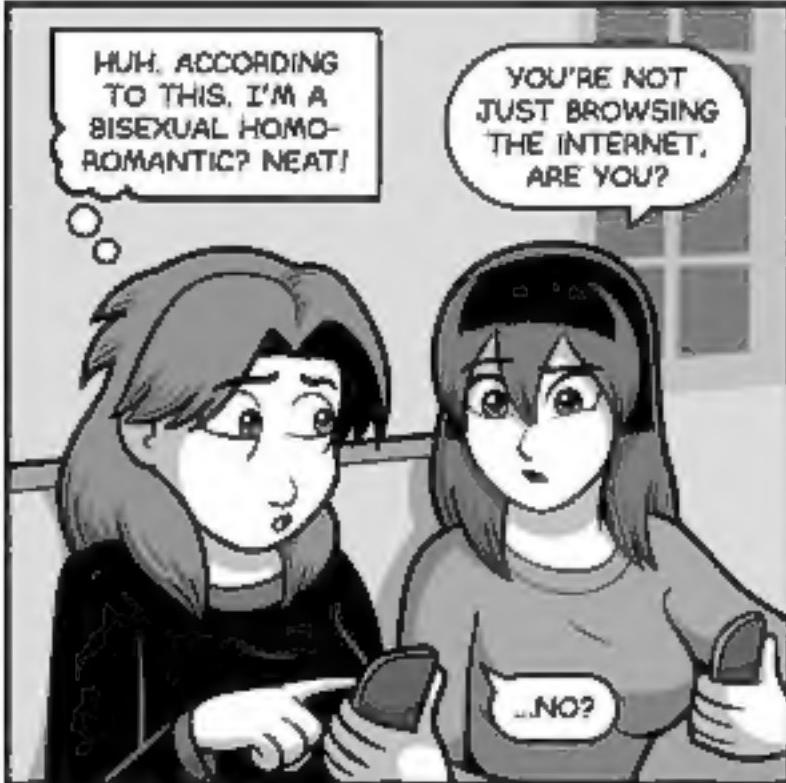
L-LET'S CONTINUE
THIS CONVERSATION
SITTING DOWN...

SERIOUSLY, THOUGH, I DON'T SEE WHY YOU DON'T LIKE THE WORD BISEXUAL. MY SISTER'S BISEXUAL. THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH IT.

HUH. ACCORDING TO THIS, I'M A BISEXUAL HOMO-ROMANTIC? NEAT!

YOU'RE NOT JUST BROWSING THE INTERNET, ARE YOU?

I'M FINE WITH "BISEXUAL". IF I WAS FILLING OUT A FORM (AND "NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS" WASN'T AN OPTION), I'D TOTALLY SELECT BISEXUAL.



I JUST PRETTY MUCH DON'T LIKE BEING CALLED ANYTHING, OR TOLD WHAT I AM, OR SHOULD BE. EXCEPT MAYBE CUTE, BUT NOBODY SAYS "YOU'RE A CUTE", SO IT'S NOT REALLY THE SAME.

IT'S LIKE... PART OF WHY I DON'T LIKE LABELING PEOPLE IS THE LABELS MEAN DIFFERENT THINGS TO DIFFERENT PEOPLE, AND THEY COME WITH THEIR OWN PREJUDICES AND EXPECTATIONS. I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'M ACTUALLY TELLING SOMEONE WITH LABELS.

AND WHEN IT COMES TO WHO I'M ATTRACTED TO, THAT'S REALLY NOBODY ELSE'S BUSINESS UNLESS I WANT TO TELL THEM, AND I'D ELABORATE ANYWAY. SO WHAT REALLY MATTERS IS WHAT I WANT TO CALL MYSELF.



AND YOU DON'T LIKE LABELING PEOPLE IN GENERAL, SO YOU DON'T WANT TO USE ANY TO DESCRIBE YOURSELF.



RIGHT. I AM NOT A BISEXUAL ASIAN BALLERINA SOCCER PLAYER GAMER GIRL. I AM A PERSON WHO IS A CITIZEN OF THE UNITED STATES WITH ANCESTORS FROM ASIA WHO DANCES BALLET, PLAYS SOCCER AND VIDEO GAMES, WHOSE SEX IS FEMALE, AND CAN FIND MEN AND WOMEN ATTRACTIVE.

